

# **Enter the Dragon**

## **The Emerging Chinese Approach to Peacebuilding in Liberia**

by

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University of  
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**600**  
YEARS

**A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of**

**Doctor of Philosophy**

**School of International Relations**

**University of St. Andrews**

**2013**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Critics of the liberal peace point out that the imposition of liberal democratic structures of governance through United Nations Peacekeeping Operations has not led to a sustainable peace being built. In reply, supporters of the liberal peace argue that even though it is imperfect, there are no better alternatives. The objective of this thesis is to examine the Chinese approach to peacebuilding and explore the possibility that it may be a potential alternative to the liberal peace. The thesis examines the Chinese understanding of the causes of insecurity in Africa; what the Chinese position is with regards to United Nations peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions in Africa; and what role China sees itself playing vis-à-vis United Nations Peacekeeping Operations in Africa.

The Chinese approach to peacebuilding recognises poverty alleviation as the foundation upon which sustainable peace can be built in post-conflict countries. Beijing does not believe the external imposition of a political ruling superstructure can succeed, and sees the liberal peace as neo-colonialism and liberal hubris. However, there is no set Chinese model of peacebuilding which can replace the liberal peace, or which African countries might follow. This is because the Chinese developmental model respects the local context, is based on pragmatism, and relies on trial and error to find the way forward.

The Chinese have been keeping a low profile in the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and have focused on providing transportation and logistical support to UNMIL. The Chinese focus on infrastructure rehabilitation is appreciated by Liberians and is making a positive contribution to the life of ordinary people. On the deep societal divide that lies at the heart of the Liberian civil war and continues to cause instability, both the Chinese approach to peacebuilding and the liberal peace remain silent.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This study is an examination of an aspect of the growing prominence of China in Africa. In writing it, I have been fortunate enough to receive the advice and support of Ian Taylor. The thesis as a whole has greatly benefitted from his insightful comments, his encouragement throughout, and his practical assistance in both Liberia and China. I would, therefore, like to take this opportunity to offer him my sincere thanks and appreciation.

I would like to acknowledge the generosity of numerous organisations for providing vital research funding: the National Research Foundation of South Africa granted me the Prestigious and Equity Scholarship for Overseas Doctoral Studies; the Allen and Nesta Ferguson Charitable Trust Scholarship for Sub-Saharan Africa Peace Studies financially supported the Tensions and Contradictions in the Liberal Peace in Africa Project based at the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, School of International Relations, University of St. Andrews – of which this thesis is the result; the School of International Relations at St Andrews also provided a research grant in 2010 to facilitate a research trip to China; and finally, the Oppenheimer Memorial Trust provided support essential to the completion of the project.

In addition, I would like to recognise the contribution made by Julian Graef, who travelled with me from Scotland to Liberia and proved to be an invaluable and cheerful teammate in tracking down interviewees and conducting interviews in Monrovia. Subsequently we were joined by Patrick Tom, Oliver Richmond, and Ian Taylor, together we made a formidable research team – conducting interviews and debating issues associated with the liberal peace and Africa.

To the Liberians who were gracious enough to sit down with me for an hour and provide me with their insights, I am truly grateful. I hope my research will contribute towards a sustainable peace.

During my time in Scotland, whilst at the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, School of International Relations, my research was greatly enhanced through discussions with Stephanie Kappler, Meike de Goede, Marc Lanteigne, Sung Yong Lee, Karl Sandstrom, Patrick Scanlon, Walter Lotze, Gladys Mokhawa, Taryn Shepperd, Rikard Jalkebro and

many others. Their insights and criticisms have greatly aided the development of the initial idea and the final product.

Whilst in China, I owe a debt of thanks to my friends and colleagues at the Institute of African Studies, Zhejiang Normal University in Jinhua City. I would like to express my deepest thanks to Xiao Yuhua, Zhou Shuqing, Li Pengtao and Zhou Zhifa who included me in their lives and provided me with insights on Chinese politics and culture as well as assisting me with my research. I would also like to thank Wu Zhengyu of the School of International Studies, Renmin University for generously allowing time for our stimulating discussion on Chinese politics and foreign policy. I am indebted to Catherine Jones of the University of Reading who patiently listened to my many incoherent ideas and gave invaluable advice and support.

To the Chinese colleagues who were kind enough to share their insights and opinions with me; please accept my heartfelt thanks.

On my return to Cape Town and throughout the final stages of the writing up, I am grateful for the encouragement, advice and perhaps most importantly – perspective on my research – provided by my undergraduate and postgraduate philosophy tutor, Augustine Shutte. I am also indebted to Harry Garuba, director of the Centre for African Studies, University of Cape Town and Lilian Jacobs, the administrative assistant for showering me with hospitality and providing me with an office during my six month visit with the Centre in 2011.

I am blessed to have many supportive friends and family. I thank Navine Christian, as well as Tim and Tina Long who opened their homes and provided me with the ideal writer's retreat. Throughout the whole process of the research I could not have endured without the support and encouragement of Sarah Meny-Gibert, Karen Peters and Lara Davison who had faith in my abilities and urged me to pursue this project to the very end. I also thank Julian Titus and Andrew Aylward who provided a second home for me in the UK. I would also like to thank Tessa Eidelman who allowed me to impose on our friendship by checking and correcting my references as well as Kate Highman who counselled me to not rush and did a diligent, painstaking and thorough job in editing the final draft.

Finally and most importantly, I thank my parents who provided indefatigable support throughout this journey.

## **ACRONYMS**

AU – African Union

CCP – Chinese Communist Party

CPA – Comprehensive Peace Agreement

DPKO – Department of Peacekeeping Operations

ECOMIL – ECOWAS Mission in Liberia

ECOMOG – Economic Community of West African States Ceasefire Monitoring Group

ECOWAS – Economic Community of West African States

EU – European Union

FDI – Foreign Direct Investment

FOCAC – Forum on China Africa Cooperation

ICC – International Criminal Court

IFI – International Financial Institution

INPFL – Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia

INTERFET – International Force East Timor

ISF – International Stabilisation Force

KPCS – Kimberly Process Certification Scheme

LRDC – Liberian Reconstruction and Development Committee

LURD – Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy

MINUSTAH – United Nations Stabilisation Mission in Haiti

MODEL – Movement for Democracy in Liberia

MPEA – Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs

NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organisation

NEPAD – New Partnership for Africa's Development

NPFL – National Patriotic Front of Liberia

ONUC – United Nations Operation in the Congo

ONUMOZ – United Nations Operation in Mozambique

PAL – Progressive Alliance of Liberians

PRC – People's Redemption Council (Liberia)

PRC – People's Republic of China

PRS – Poverty Reduction Strategy



RUF – Revolutionary United Front (Sierra Leone)  
SCR – Security Council Resolution  
UN – United Nations  
UNAMIR – United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda  
UNAVEM I – United Nations Angola Verification Mission I  
UNAVEM II – United Nations Angola Verification Mission II  
UNEF – United Nations Emergency Force  
UNIKOM – United Nations Iraq Kuwait Observer Mission  
UNITA – National Union for the Total Independence of Angola  
UNMIL – United Nations Mission in Liberia  
UNOGIL – United Nations Observer Group in Lebanon  
UNPKO – United Nations Peacekeeping Operation  
UNSC – United Nations Security Council  
UNTAET – UN Transitional Administration in East Timor  
UNTSO – United Nations Truth Observer Mission  
WTO – World Trade Organization

**NOTE:**

- 1. Chinese names have been sequenced in the Chinese practice of family name first followed by given name. For example, Deng Xiaoping.**
- 2. Africa, unless otherwise stated, denotes sub-Saharan Africa.**



## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

China's current emergence in Africa is the most important international relations development for Africa since the end of the Cold War (Alden, Large and de Oliveira, 2008; Taylor, 2010). China has recently overtaken Britain and France and is now Africa's second largest bilateral trading partner, after the United States. This economic surge in Chinese activity in Africa is unprecedented – the value of bilateral trade grew from US\$4 billion in 1996 to US\$106,7 billion in 2008 (Taylor, 2010: 69). In the wake of China's Year of Africa (2006), which culminated in the largest gathering of African heads of states in history, in November at the Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, the emergent Chinese presence in Africa is attracting unprecedented interest. The media, academics, international organisations and government agencies from the US, Europe, Africa and China itself have produced a great number, and a wide range, of opinions, commentary and analysis on this development.

However, although widely covered and highly topical, issues pertaining to China-Africa relations are under-researched, poorly understood and often marked by exoticism (Chan, 2008; Large, 2008). A survey of Western, English-language media coverage of China-Africa relations and China in Africa betray a general attitude of alarm. Headlines paint a picture of a Chinese onslaught in Africa, for example: "How China's taking over Africa and why the West should be VERY worried" (Malone, 2008); "How China's support of Sudan shields a regime called 'genocidal'" (*The Christian Science Monitor*, June 26, 2007); "China in Africa: Never too late to scramble" (*The Economist*, October 26, 2006). On the other hand, reportage by Chinese media outlets paints a picture of universal adoration from Africans towards the Chinese and Chinese engagements in Africa: "*Zanbiya Baozhi Cheng Zhongguo Shi Feizhou Zhenzheng Pengyou*" [China is a true friend of Africa says Zambian newspaper] (*Xinhua*, November 23, 2006); "*Xi Gong Ti Shengzan Zhongfei Hezuoluntan Tuidong Zhongfei Youyi He Hezuo*" [ECOWAS praise China-Africa Cooperation Forum in building China-Africa friendship and cooperation] (*Xinhua*, November 22, 2006); "*Hujintao: Zhongguo Shi Feizhou Wei Ke Xinglai Yikao de Quiantianhou Pengyou*" [China sees

Africa as reliable all-weather friend says Hu Jintao] (*Nanfang Baowang* [Southern Daily], November 2, 2009).

While the criticism of exoticism and poor research in a great number of mainstream English commentaries is valid, this criticism is equally valid for Chinese commentary. Often, the only difference between Chinese and English commentaries is that they hold ideologically opposite viewpoints on Chinese intentions and African receptions. Chinese presence in Africa is not new, nor is the dire warning of Chinese colonisation of Africa. Beijing's interest in Africa has risen and fallen according to its domestic political situation and its contestation with the Soviet Union during the Cold War and (Alden, Large and de Oliveira, 2008; Brautigam, 2009; Li, 2009; Taylor, 1998). It is interesting to note how similar literature from the 1960s compares with that published over the past five years in warning of a Chinese onslaught in Africa (*American-African Affairs Association*, 1966; Lessing, 1962; Scalapino, 1964). The language may have changed from 'propaganda' and 'indoctrination' to today's 'support for rogue regimes' and 'arms sales', but concern about undue Chinese influence in Africa remains the same (Large, 2008: 48).

A series of better-researched books began to appear in the early 1970s. These demystified China's 'safari' in Africa (Hutchison, 1975; Larkin, 1971; Ogunsanwo, 1974; Snow, 1988) and put to rest alarmist warnings of an inevitable Maoist revolution in Africa. Similarly, knee-jerk reactions to Chinese colonisation in Africa and a scramble for African resources have been countered by fieldwork-based research published over the past few years (Brautigam, 2009; Taylor, 2006a, 2009, 2010).

As the 'first wave' of alarmist reaction by Western commentators (and counter-reaction by Chinese commentators) on China's emergence in Africa in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century draws to a close, better-informed and balanced studies on different aspects of China-Africa relations and Chinese engagements in Africa are beginning to emerge. Whereas the first wave of research tended to be characterised by broad generalisations, which characterised emerging China-Africa relations as either 'opportunity' or 'threat', the emerging wave of research on China in Africa and Sino-Africa relations is beginning to examine the particular issues informed by fieldwork data.

In the area of security studies and the security implications of China's emergence in Africa, the dominant popular discourse in the West has cited investments in African

resources by Chinese state owned enterprises (SOEs) as reminiscent of previous colonial exploitation, with the implication that China's presence in Africa is destabilising (Tull, 2006). However, a growing body of literature has begun to examine China's impact on African security in specific areas, for example on human rights (Brown and Sriram, 2008), on Chinese arms sales (Shinn, 2008; Taylor, 2008), Chinese-African oil security (Jiang, 2009; Taylor, 2007b), security cooperation with the European Union (Holslag and van Hoeymissen, 2010) and the People's Republic of China's (PRC's) participation in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKOs) in Africa (Fravel, 1996; Gill and Huang, 2009; Stahle, 2008; Tzou, 1998and) . Moving beyond the dichotomy of 'threat' or 'opportunity' and the exoticism of Asians in Africa, recent assessments of Chinese engagements in African security are largely free of condemnations of colonialism. While the assessments are mixed, there is little denial of the fact that Chinese presence has begun to affect, and will have an increasing influence on, African security.

Using primary material in the form of interviews conducted in China and in Liberia, including Chinese-language materials previously unavailable outside of China, and by systematically analysing them using the methodology of discourse analysis adopted for International Relations (IR), it is my hope that this study, an explanatory account of China-Africa relations and China's evolving security policy and peacebuilding perspective in particular, will contribute to both academic discourse and policy debate by providing a better account of the potentials and limitations of China's emergence in Africa.

## **FRAMING THE RESEARCH QUESTION**

The research question of this thesis lies at the intersection of two fields of study: the field of peace and conflict studies, particularly concerning the debate on the liberal peace and its "fit" in Africa (Taylor, 2007a), and the field of Chinese foreign and security policy analysis, particularly concerning Chinese engagement in multilateral peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations vis-à-vis sub-Saharan Africa.

Following the Cold War, United Nations peacekeeping operations, where neutral peacekeepers are invited to observe ceasefire agreements (with the consent and invitation of belligerents), have evolved to become comprehensive state reconstruction and peacebuilding projects underpinned by a neoliberal ideology. Within peace and conflict

studies, a polarising debate has emerged on how to build sustainable peace in post-conflict countries: on the one hand are proponents of the liberal peace, who put forward a neoliberal economic and political framework for peace (Paris, 2004). On the other are those who see this development as 'liberal hubris', not unlike liberal imperialism during the colonial era (Mac Ginty and Richmond, 2009; Paris, 2004). Fieldwork research from the Balkans to Cambodia, Liberia to East Timor, demonstrates that the liberal peace framework has not built sustainable peace, largely because democratic institutions are imposed from the top down (Mac Ginty and Richmond, 2009; Richmond and Franks, 2009). In response, proponents of the liberal peace retort that there are no alternatives but an imposed victor's peace. The current debate on the liberal peace is framed by Mac Ginty and Richmond as follows:

A critical discussion of the flaws inherent in the liberal peace has emerged, indicating polarization between those who support its liberal goals of a democratic and neoliberal framework for peace, which aspires to human rights, the rule of law and development, and those who see this as liberal hubris, replicating the errors of liberal imperialism in the 19<sup>th</sup> century... they [the supporters of the liberal peace] confront detractors of the liberal peace with the question: what alternative is there other than anarchy and continuing war? (Mac Ginty and Richmond, 2009: 2)

Expressing skepticism towards the liberal peace project in Africa, Ian Taylor points out that the liberal peace fails to recognise Africa's political context, where the ruling elites of post-colonial African states generally lack hegemony and govern on a patron-client basis. He writes:

There is a profound contradiction within the liberal peace project within Africa. This contradiction is that whilst the liberal peace might reflect the impulses of a transnationalised neoliberal hegemony, in Africa the very basic foundations of a domestic hegemonic project are mainly absent.... This skepticism towards the liberal peace is based largely on an understanding of how politics in much of Africa works and the subsequent conviction that the types of governance structures that

underpin the liberal peace cannot be hurriedly implemented without undermining the basis upon which most African presidents and their followers base their rule. In other words, the empirical state in most of Africa does not conform to Western conceptions of the Weberian state, something which is a given within the liberal peace (Taylor 2007: 562)

At its core, the criticism by critics of the liberal peace in Africa and elsewhere is that existing neopatrimonial political realities on the ground are not understood, respected or taken into account when the liberal peace is imposed from without. Sustainable peace cannot be built by imposing agendas dictated by Brussels or New York and by imposing elections, constitutional changes and various democracy programs with no regard paid to the local political context.

The observations made and criticisms leveled by Taylor, Richmond, Mac Ginty as well as other critics that liberal democratic reforms cannot be imposed from without on developing countries without regard for local political contexts were also arrived at by Deng Xiaoping during the Era of Reform in the 1980s. In a discussion with American President Jimmy Carter, Deng said that:

...people often associate democracy with America, they believe that the American system is the ideal democratic dispensation. We cannot copy your political system [American democracy]. I believe that you will understand this. If China copied your multiparty elections, separation of the three powers of government, then there is sure to be chaos. We have a population of one billion. If a group of people demonstrates on the streets today, and another group demonstrate tomorrow, then there will be problems three hundred and sixty five days of the year. How can we live like this? Will we have any energy left for development? So we cannot adapt your perspective in analyzing China's problems. China's main goal is development; it is to escape poverty, to increase its national strength, and to improve the people's lives gradually. *In order to do these things, there must be a stable political environment. Without a stable political environment, nothing can be done.* (Author's translation, emphasis added) (Deng 1987 [1993]: 244).

In a 1985 discussion with Tanzanian Vice-President Ali Hassan Mwinyi, where Mwinyi asked about the Chinese reform experience, Deng repeated the advice that peace and political stability is the necessary pre-condition for development. He said:

Our foreign policy is to oppose hegemonism and to preserve world peace. Peace is the prime objective of our foreign policy. People all over the world are demanding peace, and we too need peace for national construction. Without a peaceful environment, there can be no construction!(Deng 1985 [1993]: 116). (Author's Translation)

That peace and stability precedes and is the necessary pre-condition for economic and social development is a consistent theme for Deng's reform agenda and this was repeated in his speeches and discussions with foreign dignitaries. Deng's assessment that the Western (American) democratic system of the separation of power and elections is chaotic and not suitable for a poor and undeveloped China remains the dominant discourse against democratic reforms. This discourse continues to be expressed today as Beijing's official policy – that developing countries need to prioritize economic development before political (democratic) reforms.

Beijing's official position on post-conflict peacebuilding, as expressed by Shen Guofang, Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN, is that:

Poverty leads to social instability, which will in turn be a threat to peace and security at the national and even regional levels... In order to uproot the causes of conflict, we must help developing countries, especially the least-developed countries, to seek economic development, eradicate poverty, curb diseases, improve the environment and fight against social injustice... The early realisation of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants and the promotion of the repatriation, resettlement and the economic recovery of refugees and displaced persons constitute the short-term objectives of peacebuilding. The long-term objectives, however, are the eradication of poverty, development of the



economy as well as a peaceful and rewarding life for peace in the post-conflict countries and regions (Shen, 2001).

To be sure, the (emerging) Chinese approach to and practice of peacebuilding is an externalisation of its own developmental model adopted since initiating the Reform and Opening-up Policy [*gaige kaifang*] in 1978. The Chinese experience during the *gaige kaifang* era and repeatedly emphasized in the post-Tiananmen Square Incident era is that economic development and poverty alleviation can only occur where there is political stability at the top. Instead of focusing on reforming legal and political institutions and imposing a liberal democratic structure of government, the Chinese approach to peacebuilding focuses on economic development through infrastructure rehabilitation and poverty alleviation measures.

Arguably, the Chinese approach to peacebuilding is equally ignorant of the African neopatrimonial political system as the liberal peace is and serious doubts can be raised on the applicability of the Asian developmental model in Africa. However, the Chinese approach to peacebuilding, as will be shown, is flexible and non-prescriptive. In China, the Chinese model of state-directed economic development is constantly being modified as Beijing pragmatically and regularly assesses its economic progress and makes necessary adjustments and adaptations. Given the inflexible imposition of a liberal democratic formula in the case of the liberal peace, and given the successes of the Asian developmental model, the Chinese approach to peacebuilding as practiced in Liberia deserves further analysis.

In the context of the debate on the liberal peace in Africa, the research question that guides this thesis is as follows: What is the Chinese approach to peacebuilding? How is it carried out on the ground in Liberia? Does it offer a viable alternative to the liberal peace in Africa?

## **A CHINESE APPROACH TO PEACEBUILDING IN AFRICA?**

A perennial but elusive subject for scholars and commentators alike on China in Africa is the so-called 'Chinese model' and its potential applicability in the African context (Taylor, 2010; 76-78). The Asian developmental model that the PRC has been following provides

African leaders with an attractive alternative developmental model to the traditional Western models of development (Naidu and Davis, 2006). In the context of the debates on post-conflict peacebuilding, the *Chinese approach to peacebuilding* is tantalising.

In the context of China's sometimes vocal and ideological opposition to the liberal peace,<sup>1</sup> its growing engagement with and experience in UNPKOs, and its professed membership and leadership of the developing world, the objective of this thesis is to identify and critically examine the Chinese understanding of African insecurity and the Chinese perspective on peacebuilding in Africa, using a case study of the Chinese approach to peacebuilding in practice in Liberia.

When Deng initiated the Reform and Opening-up Program, he and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) realised that the road ahead would not be easy. Deng coined the now well-known phrase “crossing the river by holding the stones” as a guiding principle as China embarked on economic reforms. Over the past thirty years, policy adjustments have been made, more often than not, in response to “imminent crisis” (Yao, 2010). The Chinese economic model was a result of “a combination of mixed ownership, basic property rights, and heavy government intervention” (Yao, 2010). This is in contrast to the free market approach of the “Washington Consensus”. Joshua Cooper Ramo, a former foreign editor of *Time Magazine* named the Chinese economic model the “Beijing Consensus” (2004). As Chinese aid and investments began to expand overseas at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, the Chinese model of development that was developed in the 1980s and 1990s through a series of trial and error was brought to Africa (Brautigam, 2000). This model of development and investment is largely the externalisation of China's own development model (Brautigam, 2000; Jiang, 2009). This developmental model emphasises infrastructure (re)construction backed by resource-secured loans, agriculture projects to stabilise food security, and higher education scholarships for African students. The Chinese emphasis on infrastructure, agriculture and higher education filled an important gap at precisely the moment when Western developmental partners emphasised

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<sup>1</sup> There is no unified and official Chinese stance against the liberal peace. Both Liu Guijin, the Chinese Special Representative to Africa, and Zhou Yuxia, the Chinese ambassador in Liberia, were at pains to emphasize that China does not condemn the liberal peace. But nor are the Chinese officially offering a model that is superior to the liberal peace.

governance issues as a solution to African development (Brautigam, 2000). As far as Chinese construction firms' rehabilitation of basic infrastructure, the provision of agriculture aid, and the provision of scholarships can be considered a part of post-conflict peacebuilding, the emergent Chinese approach to peacebuilding is already filling an important gap left by traditional Western donors.

While the success of China's reforms over the past thirty years makes it the envy of the South, it is important to note at the outset that there is no 'model' for development and reconstruction that countries in Africa may be able to copy. First, it is a truism that the political and economic circumstances of China and developing countries in Africa are vastly different, making valid transplantations of policies and experiences very difficult. Moreover, Kennedy persuasively argued that the much touted concept of the Beijing Consensus is "a misguided and inaccurate summary of China's actual reform experience" (Kennedy, 2010: 461). However, despite the many shortcomings of Ramo's Beijing Consensus, the conception of a Chinese experience remains "...nevertheless a useful touchstone to consider the evolution of developmental paradigms, compare China's experience with that of others, identify the most distinctive features of China's experience, and evaluate its significance for the development prospects of other countries and for international relations" (Kennedy, 2010: 462). It is in the sense that China's experiences may be useful in an African peacebuilding context that an account of the Chinese approach to peacebuilding is provided and examined in this thesis. Given the debate on different paradigms of peacebuilding and the case of the 'fit of the liberal peace in Africa', it is very likely that the Chinese experience, perspective, and on-the-ground participation in UNPKOs and in the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) in particular will itself provide a useful touchstone in evaluating and considering different peacebuilding paradigms.

In studies focusing on the Chinese impact on Africa security through its multilateral peacekeeping contributions, consensus has emerged that Chinese United Nations peacekeeping contributions have made a positive contribution to making up the shortfall in personnel and capacity in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations and (Gill and Huang, 2009; He, 2007; International Crisis Group, 2009; Saferworld, 2011; Wu and Taylor, 2011). However, even though Beijing's attitude towards UNPKO has shifted radically since the Revolutionary era, the PRC has up to now only tentatively engaged in UNPKOs and has not

taken a leadership position both in terms of shaping the evolution of UNPKOs in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and in leading peacebuilding missions (Saferworld, 2011; Stahle, 2008; Zhou, 2011).

There are good reasons to expect the trend of increasing Chinese engagements in Africa, in UNPKOs, and in African UNPKOs to continue to increase. As Beijing gains more diplomatic experience in the UN and in Africa, it is reasonable to expect Beijing to play a greater role – perhaps even a leadership role eventually – in peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations in Africa. There is a clear trend of increasing Chinese engagement in UNPKOs since 1989, a trend which forms part of greater Chinese strategic engagement with international organisations. China's status as one of the largest bilateral trading partners with Africa; its status as the largest troop contributor of the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council to UNPKOs (Taylor, 2009: 133); and Beijing's long-held desire for a leadership position in the developing world all mean that we can expect steadily increasing Chinese interest, engagement and participation in multilateral peacekeeping and peacebuilding in Africa.

The Chinese understanding of the concept of 'security' in 'African security policy' is primarily of national security. This is not necessarily the same as what Western commentators or African interviewees understand by security. Outside China, the understanding of security ranges from the traditional understanding of security as 'national security' to a post-Cold War focus on 'human security' and a post 9/11 emphasis on 'non-traditional security'. With national security, the focus is on military defence and maximising the interest of the Western nation state in an anarchic international system. Human security, on the other hand, moves away from emphasising the security of the nation state to emphasising the welfare of the ordinary people (Paris, 2001). Non-traditional security focuses on the environment, energy insecurity, domestic and social contradictions and terrorism (Craig, 2007). It is worth noting that the emphasis by the Chinese epistemic community is mainly on traditional national security issues, whereas Western and African commentaries and critiques range from traditional to human to non-traditional securities. This reflects a Chinese emphasis on, and preference for, sovereignty and state-to-state relations over the rise of 'human rights above sovereignty' discourse.

## **TENSIONS AND CONTRADICTIONS IN CHINESE PARTICIPATION IN UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS AND PEACEBUILDING IN AFRICA**

Beijing's position on UNPKOs is a puzzle. The PRC's traditional position on international intervention in conflicts is that it is hegemonic imperial intervention in domestic affairs of sovereign countries. The PRC has, since its founding in 1949, been a staunch defender of the traditional Westphalian principle of sovereignty and non-interference in domestic affairs (Carlson, 2004; Stahle, 2008). There are historical, normative and practical reasons for this. Historically, imperial China's door was forced open by Western gun boats, beginning with the Opium War in 1839. The subsequent 'Century of Humiliation' that ensued as China lost sovereignty to colonial powers as a result of colonial invasions has become central to Chinese national identity and has informed Chinese nationalism (Scott 2008; Zhao2004). It was against the existential threat of Western and Japanese invasions and against colonial interference in its domestic affairs that Sun Yat-Sen founded the Republic of China in 1911 and Mao Zedong founded the People's Republic in 1949.

The loss of sovereignty in China's modern history means that the Chinese Communist Party government always has been, and still is, hypersensitive against encroachments of the principle of sovereignty and the interference by great powers in the domestic affairs of developing countries. This traditional stance on Westphalian sovereignty has directly translated to its staunch insistence that UNPKOs can only be sent at the host nation's invitation (Carlson, 2006). In addition to the historic reason, Beijing is also concerned that UNPKOs and humanitarian intervention set a precedent for outside interference in its own 'domestic' issues – the primary one being the Taiwan question (Carlson, 2004; Wu andand Taylor, 2011).

In this historical and political context, Beijing's current status as the largest personnel contributor to UNPKOs of the five UNSC permanent members and its apparent appetite to engage further with interventionism seems contradictory and perplexing. Given China's normative stance on sovereignty, its historical and continued stance against hegemonic interference, and realist considerations against setting a precedent of having its own 'domestic affairs' interfered with, why is Beijing seemingly engaging with UNPKOs in Africa with such enthusiasm?

There are also reasons for Beijing's increasing engagement. The rapidly rising economic presence of Chinese SOEs in Africa and China's increasing dependence on African energy and resources mean that China is increasingly exposed to insecurity in Africa (de Oliveira, 2008; Taylor, 2006b; 2009). As a permanent member on the UNSC and a rising power, China has an interest in demonstrating that it is willing to shoulder responsibility for global security and thus demonstrating its *bona fides* in rising peacefully and in not challenging the current global order (He, 2007). Shouldering responsibility in maintaining global peace by participating in UNPKOs allays fears of a Chinese Threat and demonstrates the PRC as a "peaceful rising" country (He, 2007).

The tension in China's further engagement in African security through UNPKOs and peacebuilding is as follows: on the one hand, China is a developing country and needs to stand in partnership with the nations of the South; on the other hand, China is an emerging great power and needs to shoulder responsibility in maintaining the international order. On the one hand, African states are China's traditional allies against great power interference and there is a mutual interest in emphasising the principle of sovereignty; on the other hand, China's rapidly growing economic stakes in Africa means its interest is that of a great power – needing to protect its investments and secure its interests in Africa. As Chinese interest in Africa grows, it is becoming increasingly difficult for China to play both roles at the same time.

## **THEMES AND ISSUES IN THIS THESIS**

The rise of China has led to a flood of commentaries describing, analysing, condemning and celebrating it. The exponential increase in the number of commentaries on China's rising influence on Africa has not led to a great number of diverging perspectives debating the impact of China's rise on politics, security, development and the international relations of states on the continent. Overwhelmingly, the media have focused on Chinese investments' negative impacts on African markets, African employment and African security (Smith, 2011).

Long-held stereotypical colonial portrayals of Africans as helpless and without agency and of China as a threat and a 'yellow peril' have been dusted off, given a new coat of varnish, and paraded as fact. In his 1975 study titled *China's African Revolution*, Alan

Hutchison wrote of the Western commentary on communist China's activities in Africa at the time:

But there was a striking discrepancy between what China was actually doing and what her critics said she was doing, and as I watched the relationship between China and Tanzania develop, it seemed to me highly beneficial for the African country. There was no apparent Chinese 'threat', pressure or even influence (Hutchison, 1975: xi).

The current wave of discourse warning of the threat of Chinese colonialism is not the first time dire warnings have been sounded on China's threat to Africa. Communist China's support for African governments and liberation movements in the 1960s and 1970s as it struggled with the Soviet Union to gain political support inspired similarly alarmist headlines. Nor was communist China's then 'African safari' the first time the 'yellow peril' grabbed African and Western attention. The importation of Chinese labour to the Witwatersrand in the first decade of the twentieth century to make up the labour shortfall after the Anglo-Boer War (South African War) inspired a similar degree of fear and scepticism in the Transvaal (Yap, 1996).

Why do 'the Chinese' inspire such fear in popular discourses in Africa? The Chinese empire has never launched an attack on Africa, conducted an Atlantic slave trade or colonised any part of Africa. In fact, in the early 20th Century and in the 1960s, the Chinese state was so weak, indeed tethering on the brink of survival, that one could not reasonably expect a threat from China. Even today, with the emergent Chinese economy, it is inconceivable that Beijing will adopt a policy of hostility and attack or colonise an African state. The 'myth' that Hutchison recognised in the early 1970s and thought to demystify is the same myth that scholars have demystified today (Brautigam, 2010; Taylor, 2006; 2009). While the nature of the 'yellow peril' discourse is the same today, China is far more powerful today and is able to actively respond and contest what it sees as scandalous mischaracterisations of its identity. Beijing's African security policies and its engagements in UNPKOs in Africa are a part of the counter-discourse against what it sees as an unfair presentation of its identity.

The foundation of Beijing's diplomatic position with Africa has been quite consistent since diplomatic relations were established with Egypt in 1956. African states were courted and *fêted* by Beijing in an effort to bandwagon against what Beijing saw as a precarious international environment in which it was encircled and threatened by the Soviet Union and its allies and also by the United States and its allies. Alliance with the 'Third World', according to Mao's 'Three Worlds Theory,' grouped China, African and South American states into the 'Third World' (Dittmer, 1991). Beijing's accession to United Nations membership in 1971 was successful because of the African support it gathered. The refocusing of Beijing's attention on Africa in the 1990s can again be attributed to the need for Beijing to break the isolation it found itself in after Western condemnation of the Tiananmen Square incident in 1989 (Taylor, 1998).

The Chinese Communist Party has always been concerned with its image, both domestically and abroad. The Chinese language literature review in chapter two will show that Beijing has taken cognisance of criticisms of its growing presence in Africa and is actively working on managing and projecting a non-threatening, peaceful image as it emerges in Africa.

Beijing's responses on African security issues over the past decade have evolved from a 'business is business' attitude, where it washed its hands of any political impact its presence might have in Africa, to become more sophisticated (*New York Times*: August 8, 2004). Beijing's successful diplomatic persuasion of President Al Bashir of Sudan to accept an AU-UN hybrid force (Holslag, 2008), its leadership in the China-Africa Cooperation Forum, and its invitation at the end of 2010 to South Africa to join BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India, China group) demonstrate this. As part of the effort to counter the 'yellow peril' discourse which suggests it is a new colonist, Beijing has mobilised considerable resources towards promoting its identity as a 'peaceful great power' [*heping daguo*] seeking a 'harmonious world' [*hexia shijie*].

Growing into the role of a great power, Beijing has moved from a position where it was still indignant at the abuse of the 'Century of Humiliation' to a more mature stance, gradually taking on more security responsibilities through multilateral international organisations such as UNPKOs.



Observing Beijing's foreign policy positions in official announcements and in what happens on the ground, it is very noticeable that Beijing is influenced by both domestic factors and international pressure. On the foreign policy front, we can see Beijing reacting to, and shifting its policy as a result of, international criticisms. The outpouring of rhetorical rebuttal against the charge of Chinese neo-colonialism in Africa in Chinese publications (see chapter five) and Beijing's shift from 'business is business' to taking greater responsibility in Africa betray Beijing's sensitivity to domestic and international opinion and its policy evolves accordingly.

## **THEORETICAL ORIENTATION**

Our understanding of Chinese foreign policy has grown greatly since the 1990s (Deng 2008). As China's rise gathers pace, there has been a great deal of development in Chinese foreign and security policy analysis. This is aided by greater access to Chinese materials and greater exchange of scholarship between China and the rest of the world. Rising attention on China is also a function of the undeniable importance of China in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

In the post-Cold War period, a great deal of post-positivist and post-structuralist IR theory has been developed. Responding to the failure of realism in predicting the end of the Cold War, post-positivist IR theory is adding greater richness, complexity and cogency to accounts of rapidly developing IR. Central to the present study is accounting for and explaining Beijing's African security perspective. Positivist theories, with their materialist understanding of objectivity, are not able to account for shifting national identities and perspectives. Without a coherent theoretical framework that is able to take into account factors to do with China's 'struggle for status' and 'identity crisis' as it rises, existing analysis of the puzzle of why Beijing is participating in the liberal peace cannot advance beyond the current provision of the list of factors and reasons for China's increasing participation. This is dissatisfactory when there is excellent IR scholarship on Chinese foreign and security policy analysis that examines Beijing's evolving foreign policy in terms of its 'identity crisis' and 'struggle for status' and when China and Chinese scholars and diplomats are relatively accessible for interviews. Instead of a 'list' of objective reasons, and given the development of the method of discourse analysis for foreign policy analysis, a

more nuanced, in-depth, and sympathetic understanding can be had on the context, limitations and motivations of Beijing. This thesis will also provide insight into how the different factors that motivate and limit Beijing's policy relate to one another. In other words, how important is Beijing's desire to project an image of a peaceful rising power when weighed against Beijing's self-interest in maintaining the principle of sovereignty. Given Beijing's increasing dependence on oil from the Atlantic coast of North Africa, how will Beijing juggle the principle of non-interference on the one hand against protecting its oil investments on the other? Given that it is inevitable that its energy security will become more intertwined with the insecurity of oil-producing African states, how will Beijing's strategic stance evolve?

This thesis employs post-structuralist IR theory developed by Hansen in analysing the evolving Chinese African security, peacekeeping and peacebuilding policies. Hansen's theoretical model of IR focuses on the relationship between identity and foreign policy; she writes: "foreign policies rely upon representations of identity, but it is also through the formulation of foreign policy that identities are produced and reproduced" (Hansen 2006: 1). Hansen's post-structuralist methodology provides a rigorous methodology painstakingly worked out for foreign policy analysis and the focus is to determine the relationship between identity and foreign policy. In Hansen's theoretical framework, foreign policy is not made in a vacuum but is itself discourse and a part of a discursive back-and-forth in the public realm.

## **KEY DEFINITIONS**

The terminology of peace operations can often be non-specific. Some authors use the term 'peacekeeping' to refer to all types of military operations, while others use different terms to refer to each type of military operation (Paris 2004: 38). For the purposes of this thesis, the terms used will follow those provided by Paris in his work *At War's End: Building Peace after Civil Conflict* (2004):

- 'peacekeeping' refers to "the deployment of a lightly armed, multinational contingent of military personnel for non-enforcement purposes, such as the observation of a ceasefire" (Paris 2004: 38).

- ‘peacebuilding’ refers to “action undertaken at the end of a civil conflict to consolidate peace and prevent a recurrence of fighting” (Paris 2004: 38).
- ‘peacebuilding mission’ “involves the deployment of military and civilian personnel from several international agencies, with a mandate to conduct peacebuilding in a country that is just emerging from a civil war” (Paris 2004: 38).
- ‘peace operations’ and ‘peace mission’ refer to “any international peacemaking, peacekeeping, peace-enforcement, peacebuilding, or preventive diplomacy operations that include a multinational military force aimed at restoring or preserving peace” (Paris 2004: 38). The peace operation need not be led by the UN; it could be led by other organisations such as the African Union (AU), the European Union (EU) or the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO).
- ‘peacemaking’ is “the attempt to resolve an ongoing conflict, either by peaceful means such as mediation or negotiation, or, if necessary, by the authorisation of an international military force to impose a settlement to the conflict” (Paris 2004: 38).
- ‘peace enforcement’ is “the threat or use of nondefensive military force to impose, maintain, or restore a cease-fire” (Paris 2004: 38).

It is important to distinguish between peacekeeping and peacebuilding. Peacekeeping refers to military activity, the focus of which is ceasefire monitoring. Peacebuilding involves a wide range of activities, involving both military and civilian functions. Peacebuilding can include activities such as administering elections; training of judges, police force and lawyers; and the nurturing of a civil society by fostering a free press, opposition parties and non-governmental organisations. It can also involve the design and implementation of economic reforms, the reorganisation of government institutions, and the delivery of emergency humanitarian aid and financial assistance (Paris 2004: 39).

Differences in the Chinese approach to peacebuilding and the liberal peace can be summarised as follows:

Peacebuilding Issues	Liberal Peace	Chinese approach to peacebuilding
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<i>The goal of peacebuilding</i>	Liberal democracy and free market system	Economic development is fundamental and takes precedence over political reforms
<i>The focus of peacebuilding</i>	Good governance	Good government
<i>The principles of peacebuilding</i>	Democracy and universal human rights take precedence over sovereignty	Principle of sovereignty takes precedence, values and interpretations of rights can be different
<i>The strategic culture of peacebuilding</i>	Pre-emptive	Reactive
<i>The main ways of peacebuilding</i>	Top-down and bottom up, interaction between government and civil society amendments to the constitution, holding elections, establishing multi-party systems and strengthening civil society.	Top down. Improve the legitimacy of the government and the functions of civil service. Enhance the effectiveness of the ruling party and government

(drawn from Saferworld, 2011: 81; Zhao, 2011: 353)

It is in the context of, and in contrasting against, the dominant liberal peace discourse that the Chinese approach to peacebuilding perspective can be explained and understood. The liberal peace is constructed to maintain and build peace both within and between states “on the basis of liberal democracy and market economics” (Newman, Paris and Richmond, 2009: 7). The liberal peace approach to peacebuilding is premised on the assumption that democracies are more peaceful, and that, over time, the promotion of democracy is a “highly effective means of preventing conflict, both within and between states” (Kofi Annan, cited in Paris, 2004: 42). In contrast, the Chinese approach to peacebuilding is the still evolving and emerging peacebuilding perspective informed by China’s domestic experiences of reform as well as on the ground experiences gained by PRC peacekeepers in United Nations peace missions. At the moment, the Chinese approach to peacebuilding is still in an embryonic form. Chinese ambassadors and scholars are at pains to emphasize Chinese inexperience. It is important to note that the conceptualisation of the term ‘Chinese approach to peacebuilding’ in juxtaposition to the ‘liberal peace’ does not mean that the two approaches are anything close to being equal in terms of conceptual

development or on-the-ground practice. Nor does it mean that the Chinese approach to peacebuilding is ideologically opposed to Kofi Annan's assumption that, 'over time' democracies are more peaceful. The PRC's approach in involving itself in peace missions follows the same, well worn pragmatic approach that it adapted in engaging in other multilateral endeavours, that of 'feeling the stones in crossing the river'. Following the advice by Deng, the Chinese approach to peacebuilding approach is re-active, adaptable and gradually evolving as policymakers in Beijing weigh up the various demands and benefits as it steadily builds on experiences by engaging and participating in peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions on the African continent.

At present, it is not clear what form the Chinese approach will eventually take (and indeed it may always continue to evolve). Nor is it clear whether a more developed Chinese approach to peacebuilding will directly challenge the liberal peace. What is clear at present is that China has continued to externalise its developmental experiences since the 1950s, through to the 1970s and 1980s to today. The two approaches to peacebuilding are not necessarily antithetical. The liberal peace reflects, "the idea that maintaining peace in post-conflict societies requires a multi-faceted approach, with attention to a wide range of social economic and institutional needs" (Newman, Paris and Richmond, 2009: 7). Above all else, the Chinese approach to peacebuilding focuses on economic reconstruction and sees poverty and unemployment as the source of unrest. It sees immediate democratic reforms such as holding elections as a 'luxury' that should only be attended to once the basic needs of the citizens are taken care of.

The Chinese peacebuilding approach, with its focus on economic recovery should not be seen as an anti-democratic approach. Nor does the Chinese approach seek to subvert market economics, the other pillar of the liberal peace. On economic reforms, China has largely followed the Asian development model of state-directed economic development pioneered by post-World War II Japan. A model that was variously adapted with success by the so-called 'Asian Tigers' of South Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan. China was able to follow the Asian Developmental model because it was in the East Asian vicinity where there was a great deal of experience with the Asian developmental model. It is not altogether clear (and probably unlikely) if the Asian Developmental model with state-directed economics and export-driven growth can be

adapted to Liberia. However, the difference between the neo-liberal free market doctrine prescribed by the liberal peace and the Chinese approach to peacebuilding is that the Chinese approach to peacebuilding is not prescriptive. The pragmatism of the Chinese approach is epitomised by the advice by Deng that it “does not matter if it is a black or a white cat, so long as it catches mice”.

## **THE LIBERIA CASE STUDY**

This thesis does not easily fit into any one established academic discipline. As already stated, this study primarily lies in the intersection of the field of peace and conflict studies and the sub-field of Chinese foreign and security policy studies. It is the goal of this thesis to provide an account of the Chinese practice of peacebuilding and thus contribute to knowledge and to the wider debate on peacebuilding practices and perspectives in sub-Saharan Africa. It is in understanding the positives as well as the shortcomings of the emerging Chinese perspective on, and practice of, peacebuilding in an existing African context where the liberal peace is already entrenched, that the Liberian case study serves its purpose. Therefore, the Liberian case study is significant in providing an on-the-ground assessment of the liberal and the Chinese approaches to peacebuilding. Moreover, what ought to be the most important, but are all too often ignored, are the opinions of the locals .

A major criticism of the liberal peace is that is effectively imperial and neo-colonial in that local conditions and opinions are ignored and the international agencies merely impose their own framework of assessments and priorities on the locals, leading to local resistance. Purportedly, the Chinese are more sensitive to African voices. However, Beijing’s African engagement is state-centric and elite-focused and Beijing as a rule ignores African actors other than the official state. Through interviews with Liberian elites other than the official office bearers, this thesis will begin to provide a critical perspective on the Chinese approach to peacebuilding practices in Liberia.

## **STRUCTURE OF THIS THESIS**

After the introduction chapter, chapter two begins by providing a description and assessment of the sources and the making of Chinese foreign and security policy. This is followed by a discussion of the historical and area studies approaches to understanding

Chinese foreign and security policy. Thereafter, literature on Sino-Africa relations, Chinese security, and Chinese engagement in UNPKO in Africa will be systematically reviewed. chapter two concludes with a critical review of existing literature in the field.

Chapter three begins with a survey of the three major schools of IR: realism, liberalism and constructivism, and how Chinese foreign policy analytical works have utilised their perspectives. Once the three major schools of thought in accounting for China's foreign and security policy have been presented and their strengths and weaknesses discussed; the concept of discourse and discourse analysis will be discussed with reference to Michael Foucault, Edward Said and Steve Biko. Consistent with the post-structural outlook of this thesis, Lene Hansen's methodology of using discourse analysis for foreign policy analysis, specifically adapted for foreign policy analysis, will be presented.

Chapter four identifies, explains and accounts for two basic discourses that are central to this thesis's analysis of China's identity struggle. The two basic discourses are 'China as a Great Power' and 'China as a Third World Country'. Identifying and examining the struggle and contestation between these two identities provides the analytical groundwork in interpreting Chinese policy towards Africa and its approach to peacebuilding.

Chapter five traces the genealogies of the two discourses in the context of China's evolving policy on UNPKOs. Examining China's foreign policy as response to crisis 'key events', the chapter traces the evolving policy on UNPKOs.

Chapter six reviews the Chinese understanding of the causes of African insecurity and the Chinese perspective on peacekeeping and peacebuilding in Africa. The chapter examines the perspectives and attitudes of the Chinese African studies epistemic community to arrive at and to elucidate the emergent *Chinese approach to peacebuilding* discourse.

Chapter seven begins with a descriptive account of the civil war in Liberia followed by an account of the regional (ECOWAS) and international (UNSC) effort at establishing peace through the UNMIL in the country. It also provides an explanatory account of Liberia's civil war using neopatrimonialism as a framework. It provides an assessment of UNMIL's work in Liberia and critically assesses the liberal peace in Liberia.

Chapter eight is the case studies chapter and examines the Chinese approach to peacebuilding in Liberia. The Chinese approach to peacebuilding is interpreted to include both Beijing's bilateral aid as well as Chinese participation in the multilateral Poverty Reduction Strategy. China's bilateral aid to Liberia follows the tried and tested model of its diplomatic efforts to African states generally; as a part of Liberia's Poverty Reduction Strategy, the PRC continues to consistently focus on infrastructure and the economic sector and does not participate at all in good governance and rule of law sectors.

Chapter nine concludes this thesis. I argue that in the context of the shortcomings of the liberal peace, the Chinese approach to peacebuilding does not provide a replacement. In the context of China's pursuing a great power status in a multi-polar world order, increasing numbers of Chinese blue helmets should not be interpreted as Beijing having been socialised to accept the liberal peace. However, in the same way that Chinese aid and investments have both offered competition to, and been complementary to, traditional investments and aid in Africa; the Chinese approach to peacebuilding, with modifications and indigenisation, may also offer competition to and be complementary to the liberal peace.



## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter reviews the literature on Chinese foreign and security analysis. In chapter three, the three major IR approaches to Chinese foreign and security policy analysis will be presented in more detail; this chapter will focus on area studies and historical approaches in understanding Chinese foreign and security policy with specific reference to its approach and policy on African peacekeeping and peacebuilding. This chapter aims to provide a comprehensive review of the relatively small number of existing literature on China-Africa ties, the security aspect of China-Africa ties, Chinese involvement in UNPKOs and the Chinese approach to peacebuilding in Africa.

This chapter is arranged as follows. It begins by providing a description and assessment of the sources and the making of Chinese foreign and security policy. This is followed by the historical and area studies approaches to understanding Chinese foreign and security policy. Thereafter, literature on Sino-Africa relations, Chinese security and Chinese engagement in UNPKO in Africa will be systematically reviewed. The chapter concludes with a critical review of existing literature in the field.

### **DOMESTIC SOURCES OF CHINESE FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY**

China has had a long intellectual history and for most of its history, it has been the major actor in the Sino-centric world order in East Asia. As such, there is a great deal of traditional sources for Chinese scholars and policy-makers to draw on when they analyse international politics and attempt to formulate China's response. Despite a keen interest in IR theory and a growing consensus that China needs a new Chinese IR theory to guide it in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, there is as yet no Chinese IR theory (Kim, 1994a: 5; Qin, 2007: 313; Wang, 1995: 481-505). To be sure, there are distinctive "Chinese approaches in observing international politics in general" (Wang, 1995: 481). Under a strong Leninist and Mao Zedong Thought influence, all social science theories in China are expected to contribute to the building of socialism (Wang, 1995: 482). In this context, "theory has been understood as guidelines for practice and action; policy statements of rules and principles to be followed; and strategies of the state to deal with the world and other actors" (Qin, 2007: 318). The dominant perspective in China is that IR theory is not only a theoretical

framework where international affairs are observed, but “more importantly [it is] a guide for international action and foreign policy” (Wang, 1995: 483). For the Chinese foreign policy analyst and IR theorist, the expectation is that she should produce analysis that will be useful to the policy maker in the service of the Chinese state.

As a discipline, “International Studies” [*Guoji Wenti Yanjiu*] developed as necessitated by the needs of the Chinese government. By the order of Premier Zhou Enlai, schools of International Studies were established at Peking, Renmin and Fudan universities in 1964 (Wang and Niu, 2007: 3). The current development in Chinese IR and foreign policy analysis began at the close of the Cultural Revolution. Deng ordered in 1979 that, “the study of politics, jurisprudence, sociology, and world politics has been ignored in the recent past; we need to make up for lost time.” (Author’s translation) (Deng, 1994: 180-181). IR theory and the study of world politics were regarded as important fields of scholarship because they were deemed instrumental for policymaking. Since the 1980s, the study of IR theory, foreign policy analysis and world politics have received renewed vigour in China. Due to the sensitivity [*mingan xing*] of Chinese foreign policy, open debate is deemed inappropriate [*bu qiadang*]. However, in non-public forums, alternative perspectives are encouraged and welcomed by diplomats and government officials (Wang and Niu, 2007: 8).<sup>2</sup> In the journal *Shijie Jingji yu Zhenengzhi* (*World Economics and Politics*) published by the Institute of World Economics and Politics, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, IR related articles increased from 0 in 1979, 1980 and 1981 to 45 in 1982; 63 in 1983 and the numbers steadily increased to 89 in 1989. IR Theory related articles increased from 0 in 1979, 1980 and 1981 to 6 in 1982; 10 in 1987 and by 1989 there were 13 (Qin, 2007: 319). It is clear that the study of IR and foreign policy analysis has been thriving since the end of the Cultural Revolution. While there is undoubtedly a great deal of attention paid to the study of IR theory and foreign policy analysis, this does not mean that the discipline has matured. Wang Jisi, currently the dean of the School of International Studies in Peking University noted in 1995 that,

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<sup>2</sup> This was also the author’s sense during his visit to China in 2010. However, the legitimacy of the ruling party and the current one party dispensation remain taboo for discussion in public forums.

“analytical works written by PRC scholars on Chinese foreign policy comparable with those by Western scholars are hardly available (which is a sad commentary), and therefore it is difficult even to do a comparative study of Chinese and Western literatures in the same field” (Wang, 1995: 481). While the situation in Chinese academic IR is changing and there are a few notable Chinese IR scholars, this observation remains largely valid today. Commenting on the relatively low standards of Chinese IR, Wang and Dan made three assessments. They pointed out that, first, many researchers neglect theory and focus on commenting on contemporary events. Second, there is an overemphasis on policy relevance of research. Finally, there are low levels of professionalism and academic standards – articles are at a good journalistic standard but not yet reaching academic standards (2008: 370).

### *Three domestic sources of foreign and security policy*

Three sources of Chinese foreign policy discourses can be identified: the formal, the semi-formal and the informal.

First, the formal Chinese foreign policy discourse consists of Chinese official vocabulary that provides authoritative pronouncements and identifies official position. Formal discourse, especially in the early PRC era consisted mainly of the Leninist concept of a united front and of coalition politics during the War of Resistance (1937-45) (Levine, 1995: 35). Lenin’s view was that the national liberation struggles of the colonies and semi-colonies against European imperialism was at the centre of international politics (Harding, 1981: 258), and according to it China had a central part to play in anti-imperialism (Kirby, 1995: 15). In addition to Leninism-Marxism, Mao Zedong Thought, Deng Diplomatic Thought and Hu Jintao’s Harmonious World have entered into formal discourse.

The Five Principles of Co-Existence (see appendix) that Zhou Enlai had negotiated with Nehru of India in 1954 and were later adapted by the Bandung Conference in 1955 remain at the foundation of formal Chinese foreign policy. China’s Africa Policy, promulgated in 2006 is another formal discourse that expands on existing discourse and establishes the official Chinese position on Africa.

Commentating on Deng’s Diplomatic Thought, Yi Zicheng emphasised that pragmatism is the central strand that links Marxism, Mao Zedong Thought and Deng

Xiaoping Diplomatic Thought (Yi, 2004: 8). He points out that as Deng himself repeated many times, the two principles for Chinese foreign policy are:

...first, opposing hegemonism and power politics and safeguarding world peace; and second, working to establish a new international political order and a new international economic order (*People's Daily* translation, Deng, 1993: 353).

The starting point of Chinese foreign policy, according to Deng's Diplomatic Thought, is national interest (*guojia liyi*). That China acts according to its own national interest was reiterated by Deng to former President Nixon of the United States when Nixon visited Beijing in October, 1989 in the immediate aftermath of the Tiananmen Incident. Deng said, "I appreciate very much your view that, in determining relations between two countries, each party should proceed from his country's own strategic interests. I too think that each country should proceed from its own long-term strategic interests, and at the same time respect the interests of the other" (*People's Daily Translation*, Deng, 1993: 330).

The second, semi-formal discourse emanates from government think tanks and academia. Semi-formal discourse consists of the study, commentary, explanation and interpretation of Leninism-Marxism, Mao Zedong Thought, Deng Xiaoping Theory, Deng Xiaoping Diplomatic Thought and other official discourses. In addition, Western IR theory concepts [*gainai*], propositions [*mingti*] and hypothesis [*jiashe*] have also been introduced to Chinese academia and think tanks (Wang and Dan, 2008: 342).

The concept of 'peaceful rise' [*heping jueqi*], the first foreign policy concept under Hu Jintao in 2003 originated with Zheng Bijian, a former executive vice-president of the Central Committee's Central Party School and chairman of the China Reform Forum (Glaser and Medeiros, 2007). Glaser and Medeiros were able to trace the initial public articulation in 2003, the subsequent debate and later rejection of the concept as an official term in Chinese foreign policy in favour of 'peaceful development' [*heping fazhan*] (2007).

The third foreign policy discourse is the informal discourse based on how Chinese people view themselves (Levine, 1995). Informal ideology consisted of Chinese views of themselves as a great people, that they were ill-treated by the imperialists and that China

needs to 'stand up' and take its rightful place at the top table of leading nations in the modern era. While the PRC is still a dictatorship and the people cannot vote out poorly performing politicians, there is increasing evidence to suggest that the Chinese leadership is sensitive to and constrained by public opinions of political, economic and military elites (Johnston, 2006).

To be sure, the three domestic discursive sources of Chinese foreign policy are not exclusive and they influence one another. As well, foreign governments and media discourses also have an influence on Chinese foreign policy making. Glaser and Medeiros observed that the intellectual roots of the formal pronouncements on peaceful development (*heping fazhan*) lay in Chinese officials and analysts realising (reluctantly) that their Asian neighbours viewed China's rise as a potential source of instability in Asia (2007: 292-3). It is in an attempt to counter the China Threat thesis – that no great power has risen that has not challenged the existing international order with violence – and to calm the fears in the US, East and South East Asian countries, that a discourse of peaceful rise, and later peaceful development, became the dominant foreign policy discourse for China during the Hu era.

## **CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS**

Today, China has emerged once again as the leading global power. Leading Western commentators now refer to China and the United States in the same breath, noting it and the US as “the two most important states in the international system” (Foot and Walter, 2011: 1). Foot and Walter also noted that, “China's influence in global markets, its military modernization, and active diplomacy in all major regions of the world have demonstrated its growing potential to shape the global order of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (Foot and Walter, 2001: 1). When Deng came to power and re-evaluated the world situation, he abandoned the pessimistic Three Worlds analysis of Mao where conflict was seen as imminent and chose to reform and open China up and to engage with the outside world. The current process, where China is recognized and is being expected to play a leading role in shaping the international order, is a part of the continuing process of adaptation that Beijing has constantly had to make since at least the First Opium War. Therefore, Chinese foreign policy is not only a function of how Chinese leadership, policy elites or people see the world,

it is also a function of China's shifting role in the international system. It is with the history and context of Chinese IR theory and foreign policy analysis studies in mind that one can begin to understand how Beijing views the outside world. By understanding how China views itself in relation to the global order, we are better able to understand how the Chinese approach to peacebuilding – in theory and in practice – is evolving, adapting and emerging.

*The study of Chinese foreign policy in the West: a contested field*

There has been a long standing dispute between IR theorists and Sinologists. In the field of Chinese foreign policy analysis, Sinologists bring specific political, cultural and historical knowledge to bear in their study of Chinese foreign policy while IR theorists examine China on a systems level and do not treat China any differently from other states in its category and size (Whiting, 1995: 506). With ever greater integration of China into the global system, Chinese policy makers are faced with increasing pressures. The case in example is the subject of this thesis, where greater expectations are placed on the PRC's role in upholding collective security in Africa. This increasing demand on Zhongnanhai's foreign policy making also places ever greater demand on the Chinese foreign policy analyst working within and outside of China.

The field of Chinese foreign policy analysis originated in American foreign policy and academic circles and has evolved considerably over the past half a century. Kenneth Liberthal observed that “the study of Chinese diplomatic history has become fairly well developed, the study of Chinese foreign policy decision making remains very undeveloped, and the study of China's foreign relations is barely on the radar... [this was partly as a result of the] paucity of theoretical rigor” (quoted in Zhao, 1996: 15). Johnston and Ross commented that ideally China foreign policy specialists, “need to understand not only Chinese history and politics, but also international politics and the enduring sources, both domestic and international, of the international behaviour of the Chinese state” (2006: xv).

The shortcomings in the field of Chinese foreign policy analysis noted by Liberthal, Johnston and Ross are beginning to be addressed. There is now an ever greater number of specialists on Chinese foreign policy with a nuanced and sophisticated understanding of Chinese history, language, politics and culture who are also conversant in IR theory (see chapter three for a discussion on IR theoretical approaches).

### *Approaches to Chinese foreign policy analysis*

The flexible and pragmatic nature of the PRC's foreign policy has very much confounded Chinese foreign policy analysts where there is a great flourish of different approaches in explaining it. Some approaches begin implicitly from the realist analytical vantage point and observe that the CCP's foreign policy preoccupation was to combat imperialism and hegemonism (O'Leary, 1980) and that the US has been and remains the pivotal influence on the CCP's foreign policy (Sutter, 1996). Others approach Chinese foreign policy from the perspective that history is central to arriving at an understanding of Chinese actions (Hunt, 1996). Still others point out that Beijing's sensitivity to China's identity and status in the world is the ultimate determining factor that shapes Chinese foreign policy (Deng, 2005; 2008; Dittmer and Kim, 1993). The following is a survey of the different approaches.

### *Area studies and case studies approaches*

A major traditional approach to understanding Chinese foreign policy is the case studies method. Analysis of the PRC's foreign policy examines a foreign policy event or crisis and attempts to explain the subsequent decisions. Whiting is well known for starting the tradition of studying Chinese foreign policy using the case studies method by accounting for the CCP's decision to enter the Korean War against apparently impossible odds in 1950 (1960). Focusing on describing the context of the foreign policy crisis and seeking to explain Beijing's foreign policy response to it, a great majority of Chinese foreign policy analysis can arguably be classified under the case studies approach. For example, drawing on specialist knowledge of the area and access to key decision makers, You's article fits the traditional description of a case studies method. In his article, You challenges the commonly held view that China is North Korea's ally and argues that the two countries in fact share very few common interests (2001).

However, pure case studies approach without at least implicit use of IR theoretical framework is becoming rare. For example, in his 2008 article on China-North Korea relations in the mid to late 2000s, Twomey presents five IR theoretical accounts of China's security policy towards North Korea: offensive and defensive realism, strategic culture, constructivism and bureaucratic politics and argues that defensive realism best explains China's security policy towards the Korean Peninsula (2008). Similarly, using a realist

concept of the security dilemma in East Asia,<sup>3</sup> Hugues examines Japan's response to China's rise and argues that the US's role remains critical to counter the security dilemma in East Asia (2009). Yahuda examines why the growing economic interdependence between the China and Japan has not prevented constant deterioration in the early 21<sup>st</sup> Century (2006). He explains that the structural change in the international politics of East Asia, beginning with the end of the Cold War, means that countries in the region are redefining their domestic, regional and international identities and has led to a resurgence of nationalism in China and Japan.

### *Historical approach*

Historians of Chinese foreign policy argue that the field cannot ignore the richness of Chinese history. Hunt asserts that, "history is essential and central, not optional and incidental, to an understanding of Chinese foreign policy" (1996: 3). He points out the mistake made by many analysts when interpreting the xenophobic and expansionist strains of CCP foreign policy – it is too limiting to reduce the worldviews of CCP leaders to a function of Marxist-Leninist ideology and the myth of the Middle Kingdom. By looking further back into Chinese history to the Han and Tang, one is able to discern a cosmopolitan tradition which can then be traced forward to the late Qing and the Republican era, which were more adaptable and open to exchanges of ideas and materials, and where new culture, material and ideas in fact flourished (Hunt, 1996: 5-6). That the Chinese people have enjoyed both supremacy in East Asia as well as subjugation to invaders means that there is a rich source of tradition in Chinese history for CCP leaders to draw lessons and inspirations from. And it is with this tradition in mind that Hunt observes that Chinese leaders are preoccupied with, even obsessive about, maintaining a strong centralised state (Hunt, 1993: 62).

When the PRC was founded in 1949, it inherited a Chinese society with the most enduring imperial tradition in human history. This was so because of a ruling Confucian ideology that formed the basis of the entire civilization. Confucianism emphasized order,

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<sup>3</sup> The Security Dilemma postulates that in an uncertain and anarchic international system, two or more potential adversaries can adopt defensively motivated measures' that can be perceived as offensive, leading to countermeasures in kind. This leads to a spiralling arms race and less security for all.



hierarchy and social harmony. It conferred upon the emperor a right to rule only when he conducted himself correctly (and therefore justified his rule) and provided coherence to the bureaucratic system (Liberthal 1995: 9-11). Confucianism held the empire together even when China was ruled by non-Han foreigners. The Jin (265-429), the Yuan (1271-1368) and the Qing (1644-1911) were all Chinese dynasties established by non-Han foreign invaders. As a result, there is a tradition of Chinese elites co-operating with the small number of conquerors in order to maintain rule and order in imperial China. This tradition of co-operating with barbarians was in practice during the Qing under the treaty-port system and in the Republican era when regional leaders collaborated with the occupying Japanese. Kirby points out that Mao saw foreign policy events in Chinese history as “historical ‘lessons’ to be applied to policy formulation” (Kirby, 1995: 14). The fact that most Chinese dynasties fell as a result of ‘troubles within and without’ [*neiluan waihuan*] was something that CCP’s leaders were (and still are) keenly aware of. As a result, when Mao asserted that the “Chinese people have stood up” at the founding of the PRC, he held that the centrality of the Chinese experience and the need to maintain autonomy were paramount.

The case studies, historical, and IR theoretical approaches are not necessarily mutually exclusive. In fact, theoretical rigour and a nuanced understanding of Chinese history, language, politics and culture are all indispensable.

Regarding the sub-field of China’s foreign and security policy towards Africa, it is arguable that the sub-field has not been as vibrant. Where the mainstream analysts focus on how Beijing conducts its foreign relations with the US or Japan examined through case studies such as the Belgrade embassy bombing, the Spy Plane Incident or the Diaoyu / Senkaku Island, they arguably do not speak directly on how Beijing conducts its relations with Africa. Given that theory development and testing in Chinese foreign policy analysis is largely based on historical and contemporary case studies of Chinese relations with the Super Powers and its East Asian neighbours, the majority of standard Chinese foreign policy analysis texts neglect the analysis of China’s African relations. Chinese relations with Africa are normally of secondary concern to Chinese foreign and security policy analysts, and where sections on Chinese relations with the Third / developing world almost always

appear at the end of collected volumes, if at all. However, a small number of good quality works that examine China's relations with the Third / developing world do exist.

### **CHINESE RELATIONS WITH THE THIRD WORLD**

In his study of China's foreign policy with the Arab world, Behbehani divides China's policy into three distinct phases: 1955-66; 1967-70; and 1970-75 (1981). The first phase was set in motion when Zhou Enlai attended the Bandung Conference and made a positive impression on fellow Third World countries. This period ended when China began to openly compete with the USSR for legitimacy as the leader of the communist world and began to pursue a radical domestic and foreign policy. During this period, Beijing started exhorting the other Third World countries to follow its own economic policy of 'self-reliance'. In a speech to the Afro-Asian economic seminar in Algiers, the Chinese representative Nan Han-chen argued "... the fundamental way for the Afro-Asian peoples to realise these aspirations [of political and economic independence] is to develop an independent national economy on the basis of self-reliance and through assistance to each other based on equality and mutual benefit (Peking Review, 1965 quoted by Behbehani, 1981: 6). Mao saw that the Third World "constitutes the main force in the worldwide struggle against the hegemonism of the two superpowers and against imperialism and colonialism" (Mao, 1977 quoted by Behbehani, 1981:12). And Mao saw that China should be at the head of the Third World, leading the struggle against hegemonism. As a result of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 and the Sino-Soviet border clashes of 1969, Beijing began to regard the USSR as its principle foe. This meant that China's Third World policy became more anti-Soviet and less anti-American (Harding, 1981: 266). With the end of the Cultural Revolution and with Mao's passing in 1976, Chinese interest in leading a worldwide revolution waned (Harding, 1981: 259). From the isolation of the Cultural Revolution, Deng chose a foreign policy of "almost opposite dimensions" from that of Mao. Openness and international diplomacy replaced previous reticence.

Even before it came to power, the CCP shared Lenin's view that the national liberation struggles of the colonies and semi-colonies against European imperialism was at the centre of international politics (Harding, 1981: 258). Peter Van Ness analyses Chinese policy towards countries in the Third World with regard to the specific question of Beijing's

support for wars of national liberation (1970). Van Ness periodises the history of communist China as follows: 1949-1952: communist internationalism; 1953-1957: peaceful co-existence; 1958-1965: militant anti-imperialism and the emergence of anti-revisionism; and 1966-1969: the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (1970: 10). The first three years of the PRC were concerned with unifying the country. The People's Liberation Army (PLA) marching into Tibet and intervention in the Korean War were best understood as the CCP reconsolidating Chinese borders. Peaceful-coexistence between communist and non-communist countries was emphasised in the period of 1953-1957. It was during this period that the Afro-Asian Conference in Bandung was held (in April 1955) and the first contacts between Beijing and African leaders were made. Between 1958 and 1965, Beijing broke away from the Soviet Union and began to search for its own, independent economic policy, coming up with innovations like the communes and the Great Leap Forward. In terms of foreign policy, it began to seek alliances with communist governments of Asia and non-communist countries in the Third World. This foreign policy was partially due to frustration at the fact that the Bandung peaceful co-existence policy had failed to break the American military alliances in East Asia (Van Ness, 1970: 14).

Following the failures of the communes and the Great Leap Forward, and after the Sino-Soviet split, when the Soviet Union refused to take a more aggressive international posture against the capitalist West, Beijing began to focus its efforts on forming a Third World bloc comprising colonial and newly independent countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. In the context of confrontation against the two Superpowers, the Third World was seen by Mao as "presenting an opportunity to assert Chinese leadership and achieve a substantial measure of global power" (Van Ness, 1993: 204). Building a Third World alliance, Beijing worked on nationalist aspirations and the fear of renewed domination of liberation movements and newly independent countries. To this end, Beijing emphasised a common colonial experience and a common anti-imperial and anti-colonial front (Van Ness, 1993). This declaratory has been continuously stressed (Yahunda, 1978: 258). This period of Chinese foreign policy culminated in the failed attempt at holding a second Afro-Asian conference – a Second Bandung. The Second Bandung was postponed due to the coup in Algeria, the hosting country. In any event, Beijing's attempt at pressuring the Third World countries to take a stand against the two superpowers at the second Bandung was

unrealistic (1970: 17). After 1966, disputes within the CCP led to the Cultural Revolution and China withdrew into its own domestic politics. When the Sino-Soviet dispute deepened, Mao negotiated a settlement with Nixon in 1971-72, and Beijing “gave up its support for Third World revolutionary movements” (Van Ness 1998: 156). After making peace with the *status quo* and as Deng embarked upon the Open and Reform era of 1978-79, China was no longer interested in forming a Third World alliance against the superpowers. The PRC’s policy towards the Third World was therefore subject to change, “even making 180-degree changes” (Van Ness, 1998: 164).

The identification of China as an ally of the Third World is the most consistent theme of Beijing’s foreign policy (Van Ness, 1993). But Van Ness argues that Chinese leaders do not truly identify China in terms of the Third World. He argues that, firstly, Chinese leaders manifest great cultural pride (or arrogance) in being Chinese and that invoking the Third World reminds the Chinese of the ‘Century of Humiliation’. Secondly, the Chinese have not translated the rhetoric of Third World solidarity into interpersonal cooperation. There is persistent racism towards black students studying in China and the PRC does not behave as a typical Third World country in international organisations. Thirdly, China completely abandoned the principles of Third World solidarity against imperialism in the 1980s, when the opportunity became available for cooperation with capitalist countries. It is in the wake of Western condemnation of the PLA’s suppression of the 1989 student protests in Tiananmen Square that China again invoked the Third World identity (Van Ness; 1993).

Dittmer approaches Chinese foreign policy analysis from the perspective that the CCP has been attempting to find “a suitable place for itself in the modern world, a national identity” (1991: 209). With a glorious past and a tradition of being the regional hegemon, China was deeply humiliated when it was defeated by Western and Japanese invaders – inferior outsiders and barbarians according to its traditional worldview. When Mao took power in 1949, China identified itself with two international groups: the communist bloc and the Third World bloc. The Third World “provided not only a chance to associate with countries that shared China’s developmental status and difficulties but also an opportunity to exercise international leadership – an opportunity not at hand within the communist bloc” (Dittmer, 1991: 210). When threatened by imperialism, as was the case in Korea and

in the two Taiwan Straits Crises, China identified with international communism. And when the imperialist threat receded, China considered a leadership role in the Third World (1991: 249). Since the Open and Reform era, identification with the “tattered remnants of the [Third World] bloc is still deemed to offer ideological reinforcement for CCP legitimacy claims” and provide a forum for China to exercise international leadership (Dittmer, 1991: 249).

In his article “China’s Competitive Diplomacy in Africa”, Yu identifies three interrelated functions that Africa serves for Chinese diplomacy (1970). First, Africa serves as a stage in the drama of world revolution against imperialism; in turn, Chinese support for African revolutions establishes and maintains China’s revolutionary credibility. Second, Africa is seen as the battle field on which American imperialism and Soviet revisionism can be combatted. Finally, securing African recognition and support establishes China’s international legitimacy.

In his monograph, *China and Africa 1949-1970: The Foreign Policy of the People’s Republic of China*, Larkin examines the revolutionary motivations for communist China’s engagements in Africa (1971). He dismisses the likelihood that China will be able to create a Maoist Africa that takes an anti-imperialist stance against the US and an anti-revisionist stance against the Soviet Union. Larkin observes that the context in which the CCP came to power in China was vastly different to the contemporary African context for revolution. Larkin argues that there was hysteria and overreaction on the part of some US commentators on Chinese intentions in Africa. Regarding common US supposition that China was seeking to promote “communist coups and ‘wars of liberation’”, Larkin noted that Fairbank (the leading American sinologist at the time), testifying before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in 1966, chided “commentators who really ought to know better... [and] who overreacted to the visionary blueprint of world revolution put out by Lin Piao” (cited in Larkin, 1971: 197).

In his monograph *China’s Policy in Africa: 1958-71*, Ogunsanwo observes that China initiated diplomatic relations between itself and African countries in order to take part in the triangular competition with the Soviet Union and the United States (1974). He notes how limited economic power limited Chinese influence, and that no African state accepted China’s advice to reject aid from either of the superpowers. In fact, some African states saw

the triangular competition as working in their favour, helping them to secure aid and assistance from all sources (Ogunsanwo, 1974: 260). Those African governments on good terms with the Soviet Union and the Chinese detested being pressurised to support or condemn either side. They instead argued for a resolution of the Sino-Soviet split in the interest of anti-imperialist solidarity (Ogunsanwo, 1974: 263).

Hutchison begins his monograph *China's African Revolution* by noting "a striking discrepancy between what China was actually doing and what her critics said she was doing", writing that:

As I watched the relationship between China and Tanzania develop, it seemed to me highly beneficial for the African country. There was no apparent Chinese 'threat', pressure or even influence (1975: xi).

According to Hutchison, writing in 1975, the fundamental goal of Chinese foreign policy was to "ensure the continued authority of the Communist party within the state" (1975: 3). In assessing China's Africa policy, Hutchison argues that in the aftermath of the Century of Humiliation there was a deep need for China to re-establish its self-respect and determination and that the idea that no state should be subject to colonisation was a strong factor driving China's diplomatic engagements with African countries and independence movements. Hutchison notes that Africa will never been as important for China as its Asian neighbours are, but that Africa still plays an important role in Chinese diplomacy. Hutchison also notes various numerical advantages held by China: China had more diplomatic relations with countries in Africa than any other continent did; the majority of Chinese aid goes to Africa; and it was with African support that China entered the United Nations.

Reflecting Deng's reforms, whereby China focused on reform and moved away from the ideal of world revolution, Chinese attention to Africa cooled in the 1980s ( Li, 2006a; Snow, 1988, 1995; Taylor, 1998; Van Ness, 1993;). Reflecting this decrease in Chinese activities in Africa, publications on China in Africa have decreased in number. Snow's *Star Raft* is outstanding in its research and analysis of the encounters between China and Africa from the time of the Ming dynasty's Admiral Zhen He to Communist China's aid assistance

in the 1970s and 1980s (1988). Like Hutchison, Snow remarks on the unease in the West when it sees Asian interest in Africa, attributing this unease to Asia threatening the West's supremacy (1988: xiv). Like Fairbank, Larkin and Hutchison, Snow notes that the fears of the Chinese peril in Africa were exaggerated. Commenting on China in Africa in the 1980s, he describes the CCP's continued ambivalence towards the West and its determination to pursue its own foreign policy course. He notes also that the Chinese continue "to urge upon Africans the need for developing countries to join forces in the battle to win a better economic deal from the industrialized world" (1988: xv).

### **SINO-AFRICA RELATIONS IN THE 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY**

In his 1998 article, Taylor argues that the turnaround in Chinese attitudes towards Africa, from the relative neglect of the 1980s to the heightened interest of the 1990s, was a result of the "heavy and persistent criticism by the developed world levelled against Beijing's human rights record" as a result of the Tiananmen Square crackdown on June 4, 1989 (Taylor, 1998: 443). In his article on the ambiguous Chinese commitment to the anti-apartheid struggle, Taylor highlights the fact that Sino-Soviet competition was the main motivation for China's support of African liberation struggles and that China had very limited capacity to influence events in apartheid South Africa (Taylor, 2000). In his second monograph on China in Africa, Taylor notes that China's economic and political involvement in Africa was "arguably the most momentous development on the continent since the end of the Cold War" (2009: 1). Taylor dispels the popular myth that China is a unitary foreign policy actor in Africa. He points out the "still-changing combination of forces" that has been remaking Chinese foreign policy since the Open and Reform era, and that China's foreign policy behaviour now reflects a plurality of actors with diverse interests (2009: 5).

In his 2006 article, Tull presents a pessimistic assessment of China's increasing engagement in Africa in terms of China contributing to economic reforms and political stability in Africa. He takes note of the fact that although China is an emerging economic superpower, it continues to portray itself to African countries as a developing country in order to emphasise common political interests in an alliance against the developed world. He argues that should Beijing continue to integrate into the Western-dominated world

order, China's need for allies in Africa to counter-balance the West is likely to diminish (2006: 475). He notes that, given that China's chief interest in Africa is resource acquisition to fuel its domestic economy, the nature of the relationship between China and resource-rich African countries is not substantively different to that between the West and Africa. With respect to Chinese promotion of democracy, human rights and conflict prevention, Tull makes a negative judgement: "there is virtually no way around the conclusion that China's massive return to Africa presents a negative political development" (2006: 476). He notes the incompatibility of China's fundamental principles of sovereignty and non-interference with the newly adapted procedures and principles adapted by the African Union, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and especially the African Peer Review Mechanism adapted by the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) (2006: 447).

A 2006 research report published by the Council on Foreign Relations, a US foreign policy think tank, examining the US's strategic approach to Africa, also considers China's rising role in Africa. The report finds Chinese firms to be "acquiring control of natural resource assets, outbidding Western contractors on major infrastructure projects, and providing soft-loans and other incentives to bolster its competitive advantage" (2006: 40). China's image as a developing country; its habit of not conditioning its loans on good governance and human rights; and its protection of rogue states through its vetoing rights on the UNSC are seen as contrary to US foreign policy objectives. The report presents a mixed assessment of China's engagement in Africa. On the positive side, China fills some gaps in Western aid to Africa, for example by assisting in agriculture and major infrastructure projects. On the negative side, cheap Chinese imports have seriously damaged African textile and consumer products industries in South Africa, Nigeria and other countries. Striking a more balanced note, the report notes that China is a legitimate competitor for African resources and that dialogue is needed.

Brautigam's 2009 monograph: *Dragon's Gift: The Real Story of China in Africa*, explains that the Chinese model of aid and development in Africa since the 1990s is based on its own model of development, established when it embarked on reform during the socialist reform period of the 1980s. With a focus on Chinese developmental aid in Africa, Brautigam reassesses China's role in Africa and counters popular negative assessments of



China in Africa, of which Tull's work and the report by the Council on Foreign Policy report are representative. Brautigam provides judicious counter-evidence to the claims that Chinese aid is tied to access to resources, that China shields rogue regimes, and that Chinese unconditional aid hampers Western efforts at fostering democracy and human rights. Brautigam's reassessment of these claims finds them to be exaggerated and distorted.

On the series of ill effects that China's emergence in Africa is purported to be having on Africa, Taylor also provides much needed nuance in the discussion about Chinese engagements in Africa. With reference to criticisms of the governance and human rights aspects of China's engagement in Africa and to Africanist literature, Taylor argues that the problem to do with human rights in Africa originates within Africa, and that it makes little sense to blame China for Africa's political problems and economic stagnation (Taylor 2007c; 2009). The general lack of a hegemonic African ruling class means that African political structures are characterised by neopatrimonialism (Taylor 2007c; 2009). In this situation, the divide between state resources and private means becomes blurred, and the 'Big Man' remains in power by using state resources to reward patrimony and threaten or subdue challengers. Taylor notes that the relationship China is building in Africa is with elites and regimes, and that this could present a problem for Beijing in crafting long-term developmental relationships (2009: 13).

Alden (2006) recognises that the primary drive for the renewed Chinese interest in Africa in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is its need for energy. He points out, however, that the analysis of the relationship needs to move beyond one-dimensional assessments and take into account a broader range of factors (Alden 2006). In addition to energy, he identifies the following motivations for Chinese engagements in Africa: the need for iron ore and other resources; food security; new markets; symbolic diplomacy and development assistance; and concern at American hegemony and a vital need to form an alliance with African states in order to counter-balance Western hegemony. Factors that motivate African engagements are: China as a source of foreign direct investment (FDI); Chinese support for African regimes; and China as a strategically significant partner in international organisations such as the UN and the World Trade Organisation (Alden 2006).

In his 2007 monograph: *China in Africa*, Alden investigates the emerging relationship between China and Africa and seeks to “assess the character and content of China’s foreign policy towards the continent” (2007: 7). Alden identifies ideological competition between the West and China in Africa. He points out that the West seeks to use its commercial dominance to structurally transform Africa, while China is simply trying to satisfy its hunger for resources (2007: 93-119). Alden describes the ideological competition as follows. On the one hand, the West has always desired to reshape African society after its own. Since the early 1990s, the Western agenda has been a mix of ‘political conditionalities’ established to foster political reform and encourage good governance, human rights and democracy. In addition neoliberal free market principles were enforced through structural adjustment programs designed to liberalise formally closed African economies. With significant resources, the Chinese state and SOEs are able to provide aid and investments without conditions on human rights and good governance. China’s willingness to parade its policy of ‘no-strings-attached’ aid and investments challenges the Western consensus on governance and development agreed upon by the developed countries.

Le Pere and Shelton’s monograph: *China, Africa and South Africa*, offers a detailed summary of the history and context of Chinese relations with Africa and argues for deeper cooperation between South Africa and China, so as to move towards a “positive South agenda” (2007: 103). Framing the issue of Sino-South Africa relations in a post-Cold War context, the authors posit that “China’s leaders rightfully make much of the fact that it is a developing country, and hence it is guided by a foreign-policy logic that stresses closer South-South cooperation, and the establishment of an equitable and just new international economic and political order” (2007: 99).

In her 2005 book chapter, Naidu assesses the PRC’s relationship with South Africa in terms of opportunities or threats. She argues that the nature of the relationship between China and South Africa is based on expediency, and that Chinese African policy is fundamentally realist (Naidu, 2005). Economically and politically, growing Chinese presence may compete with Pretoria’s desire for leadership in the region (Naidu, 2005). Assessing China-Africa engagement in the context of rapidly increasing trade figures, but also recognising the Global Financial Crisis, Naidu argues that Chinese engagements in

Africa are premised on economic engagements, and in turn, on commodity prices (Naidu, 2009). Arguing against the idea that China brings a new framework to African international politics, Naidu recognises that the state-centric nature of Beijing's diplomatic engagements is predominantly with African elites, and, as such, these interactions have little positive impact on African civil society.

In his 2008 review of the contemporary wave of China-Africa studies, Large, referring to Yu, notes that Western coverage of China-Africa relations is often emotive, describing a "monolithic Chinese dragon in an unvariegated African Bush stripped of historical and political content" (Large, 2008a: 46). Large notes that there were very few publications on China-Africa relations in the 1990s, with Taylor's being the exception. Large judges the recent wave of literature on China-Africa relations (with certain exceptions) to comprise "sometimes reactive but generally broad-ranging assessments of a comparatively new or recently reanimated subject", noting that most of the literature is not substantiated by sustained fieldwork research, and that Chinese-language sources and recent literature on Chinese foreign relations are both neglected (Large, 2008: 56). This literature review concurs with the assessments made by Large.

In reviews of China-Africa relations, the security aspect has begun to receive greater attention. The next section of this literature review focuses on scholarship and commentary on security.

## **CHINA'S AFRICA SECURITY RELATIONS**

### *Military Assistance and Arms Sales*

Shinn notes that Deng's 'twenty-four character' strategy – to observe calmly; secure our position; cope with affairs calmly, hide our capacities and bide our time; be good at maintaining a low profile and never claim leadership – is often quoted by senior Chinese national security officials (2008). As far as numbers are concerned, the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency reports China to have only supplied US\$42 million worth of arms to Africa, with Tanzania receiving 83 percent of the total, between 1961 and 1971 (2008: 158). Since the late 1970s, China's arms supply to Africa has decreased drastically. In the 1990s there was a slight increase in the Chinese supply of arms, when Chinese arms were attractive for their low prices. Chinese military and security relations "focus

overwhelmingly on its periphery”, and therefore Africa (along with South America) is not a critical part of China’s security policy (Shinn, 2008: 155). Shinn observes that China offers military assistance or training to every African country with which it holds official diplomatic relations and that military and security cooperation is “a corollary to Beijing’s much greater use of soft power in advancing its interest in the African continent” (2008: 183). It is vital for Beijing to maintain access to African resources and as such it will expand military-security cooperation, especially with resource-rich countries.

On Chinese arms sales to Africa, Taylor remarks that in the context of Chinese investments in infrastructure and high commodity prices, which are positives for Africa, “a key negative aspect of the relationship is the sale of Chinese-made arms to the continent” (2008: 37). Taylor notes that Chinese arms, water cannons, internet interception technology and cell phone bugging equipment have enabled the Mugabe regime to continue to maintain control over the populace and that Chinese-made helicopter gunships deployed from Chinese oil company airstrips have been used in attacks on civilians. Taylor also notes that it is difficult for Beijing to control its arms manufacturers, who are profit-driven (Taylor, 2009: 127).

### *Energy Security*

Evaluating China’s rapidly expanding role as an energy extractor in Africa, Jiang argues that much of what the Chinese government, companies and individual entrepreneurs are doing in Africa is an externalisation of China’s own modernisation policies in the past three decades (Jiang, 2009). Approaching Chinese engagement in Africa from the perspective of Chinese domestic developments, Jiang points out that China is not a monolithic bloc and that the three major actors – the government, SOEs and individual entrepreneurs – do not have a set pattern of behaviour (Jiang, 2009: 586).

The PRC’s main import from Africa is oil and it consists of 70 percent of all of Africa’s exports to China (Taylor, 2009: 37). Of the top five African countries that China receives exports from, four are oil-producing countries, with South Africa being the only exception. The top five African countries that China exported to in 2006, in descending order, were: Angola, South Africa, Congo-Brazzaville, Equatorial Guinea and Sudan. China became a net importer of oil in 1993 and its robust economic growth in the 1990s and

2000 meant that its oil consumption doubled between 1995 and 2005. As China has become increasingly dependent on foreign oil, it has become strategically important that it protect its energy supplies. Receiving over 40 percent of its oil from the Middle East, China is motivated to diversify its supply and encourage its oil companies to seek out more sources of oil (Taylor, 2009). Problematising China's approach to oil investment, Taylor notes that Chinese demand is boosting commodity prices and filling the coffers of resource-rich African countries. The key difference between China and the West is that China is a newcomer, attempting to grab opportunities, while the West seeks to protect its established investments (Taylor, 2006).

## **CHINA AND UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS**

Examinations of Chinese engagements with the UN and Beijing's attempts at joining it began before China was officially admitted to the UN in 1972 (Bloomfield, 1966; Weng, 1966). Indeed, observing the communist monolith's attitude towards the UN was seen as important for understanding Beijing's foreign policy (Kim, 1974). Kim's 1979 monograph: *China, the United Nations, and World Order* was pioneering in advancing a new conceptual framework for analysing Chinese foreign policy in relation to the UN. Kim's monograph also viewed China's foreign policy in terms of world order studies (Kim, 1979).

Fravel's 1996 article was the first to examine Beijing's then tentative participation in UNPKOs since its first deployment of 20 military observers to the UN Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) to monitor elections in Namibia in 1989. He asserts that "[a]n examination of China's attitude towards peacekeeping operations can identify China's general attitude towards multilateral intervention and collective security" (Fravel, 1996: 1103). Fravel was the first to describe systematically the PRC's changing attitude towards different types of UNPKOs. He argues that China's conservative attitude towards UNPKOs is the result of its normative attitude to protecting the status of sovereignty. According to Fravel, "China's peacekeeping policy mirrors the leadership's domestic emphasis on maintaining legitimacy and power. The importance that China has attached to the *principle* of state sovereignty reflects the leadership's concern about threats to *Chinese* sovereignty" (1996: 1121).

Tzou's 1998 article on the PRC's policy towards UNPKOs examines China's attitude towards UNPKOs since its founding in 1949. Tzou points out that Beijing never took a position against UNPKOs, but that its vocal oppositions were against US, French, British and Belgium interference in the Third World through the instrument of UNPKOs. Tzou notes that the PRC's policy toward UNPKOs is largely in keeping with shifts in its own foreign policy. Before 1971, it rejected UNPKOs as an instrument of domination by Western countries. After 1971, China remained opposed to UNPKOs due to its anti-imperialist and anti-revisionist stance against the US and USSR respectively. In the 1980s, Beijing's policy changed from world revolution and it began to support peacekeeping operations.

The centrality of the value of sovereignty for the Chinese and for the legitimacy of the CCP's regime is also crucial to an article by Gill and Reilly (2000) on Chinese participation in UNPKOs. According to them,

[t]he concept of national sovereignty serves to sustain domestic authority against foreign incursions. For the Chinese leadership, defence of a 'thick' notion of sovereignty also serves its efforts to enhance its legitimacy, to deflect criticisms of domestic policies, and to resist outside involvement in the Taiwan issue (2000: 41).

Gill and Reilly argue that the West needs to encourage Beijing to further engage in UNPKOs. In the context of the policy debate on managing China's rise, they argue that a greater peacekeeping role for China will lead to greater integration of China into the norms cherished by the international community. They advocate a policy of encouraging greater participation in the UNPKOs on the part of the PRC. According to Gill and Reilly (2008), participation in UNPKOs will be an exercise in confidence-building for the Chinese military, will lead to greater transparency within the PLA, and will serve to reduce regional distrust of China. They observe signs of Chinese flexibility with regard to the principle of sovereignty at the end of 1999. They also note the potential drawbacks to greater Chinese engagement, pointing out that UNPKOs could become captive to the Chinese position and that this would undo post-Cold War developments.

Carlson has the most extensive and sustained publication record of studies examining the PRC's evolving understanding of the principle of sovereignty (Carlson 2002;

2004; 2006; 2011). As more interventionist peacekeeping and humanitarian aid operations developed in the post-Cold War period of the 1990s, the Chinese position on UN humanitarian operations shifted reluctantly and slowly. Carlson notes that Beijing bitterly protested and voiced its opposition to intervention in Kosovo in 1998, and held that the Belgrade embassy bombing was intentional (2002; 2004; 2006). However, China supported the deployment of UN peacekeeping forces to East Timor in 1999, before it had reached agreement with the US on reparations for the embassy bombing in Belgrade (2002). On the Chinese understanding of the principle of sovereignty, Carlson notes two foundational positions held by the Chinese. First, Chinese scholars emphasise the Century of Humiliation and the Chinese loss of sovereignty during Western colonisation. Second, Chinese foreign policy elites are apprehensive that developments in humanitarian intervention will set a precedent for the international community to intervene in the Taiwan issue (2002; 2006). With reference to Van Ness, he notes the unique position of China, the only permanent member of the UNSC to have cultivated a Third World and developing country identity. Echoing Fravel, Carlson argues that gauging the extent of change in Chinese attitudes towards intervention and sovereignty provides a “crucial yardstick” for measuring how far China has been integrated into the international system (2006: 121).

Stahle’s 2006 Master’s thesis and his 2008 article in the *China Quarterly* on China’s shifting attitude towards UNPKOs analyses China’s voting behaviour on peacekeeping resolutions. Noting that China has the potential to be the most resourceful peacekeeping contributor, he argues that the PRC’s greater participation in UNPKOs in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is a result of Beijing’s experience of peacekeeping in the 1990s. Following the model of UN vote analysis used by Kim thirty years earlier, and tracking both the changing Chinese attitude as well as and the evolving models of UNPKOs, Stahle presents the changes in Chinese attitude towards UNPKOs. With reference to China’s UNSC voting records, Stahle discovers that Chinese reluctance to support UNPKOs eased over the decade of the 1990s and that China has become a confident supporter of peace support operations in the new millennium (2008). He points out that China’s acceptance of UNPKOs is a product of its greater involvement in the formulation of peacekeeping mandates. A key development was the Brahimi Report in 2000. The Brahimi Report addressed some of China’s concerns

by placing restrictions on the use of force in peace support operations, limiting the role of pivotal states by clear mandate, and trying to address the root causes of the conflict (2000).

Gill and Huang examine China's expanding peacekeeping role since the mid-1990s in their 2009 policy paper (Gill and Huang, 2009). They note that China's UNPKO policy was in line with "a more engaged, pragmatic and constructive approach in its external relations that is increasingly convergent both with its own globalising interest and with the interests of other major powers" (2009: 1). Practically, they note that the PRC's considerable political, material and human resources are vital for expanding UNPKO operations. Further, Beijing's focus on providing engineers, transport battalions and medical units fills a widening gap as Western countries increasingly withdraw from UNPKOs. Consistent with Gill's earlier position in 2000 to socialise China into a Western-led international society, Gill and Huang reiterate his argument that China's expanding engagement with UNPKOs provides an important window of opportunity for the West to engage with China more closely on security issues, regional stability, military transparency and confidence building (2009: 31). For China, participation in UNPKOs offers Chinese military forces learning opportunities and field experience in areas of strategic importance (2009: 31).

As a policy recommendation to the UN, Gill and Huang recommend that China "increase financial and material contributions to the DPKO and to UN Peace operations" and expand engagement with regional organizations such as Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the AU and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (2009: x). Noting Sino-US strategic mistrust, Gill and Huang admit that there will probably be limited military cooperation between the two, but that military cooperation may be possible between European countries and China (2009: 33). For the Chinese, Gill and Huang observe that China clearly desires greater influence in shaping UNPKOs after Chinese policy principles and national interest (2009: 34). Traditional views on the principle of sovereignty will continue to guide Chinese engagements and China will be unenthusiastic about intervention, especially in cases where international security is not at peril or the country's government does not extend an invitation to the UN to intervene (2009: 35).

He's 2007 policy paper on China's changing policy on UNPKOs is notable in that it is drafted by an experienced Chinese peacekeeper with field experience and makes extensive



reference to Chinese sources (He, 2007).<sup>4</sup> He provides a periodization of the evolving Chinese policy on UNPKOs: phase one, from 1971-1980, in which there was an inactive policy; phase two, from 1981-1987, in which there was a change in attitude; phase three, from 1988-1989, in which China's profile rose and new challenges were met; and phase four, a new era of participation.

He notes that an analysis of China's policy towards UNPKOs after 1999 needs to be done as a part of a "comprehensive review of China's diplomatic strategy in the context of globalisation, China's growing international profile, as well as its changing internal and external environment" (2007: 43). He remarks on the increasing sophistication of Chinese diplomacy in the case of Haiti. Haiti has a pro-Taiwan policy and is a supporter of Taiwan's entry into the UN. However, China did not veto the United Nations Stabilisation Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). There has been growing Chinese participation in UNPKOs after 1999 as a result of China's growing capabilities, its rising national strength (growing on the back of strong and consistent economic growth), and a favourable international environment, in which the 9/11 attacks drew the US's attention to counter-terrorism. He also notes increased confidence on the part of Beijing and accumulated experience in UNPKOs (2007).

He provides three strategic reasons to account for China's increasing engagements with UNPKOs. First, it is a part of Beijing's strategy to project the image of China as a responsible great power. Second, in the face of unilateralism by the US and its Western allies in the post-Cold War era, Beijing's efforts at bolstering the UN and the multilateralism it represents also serve to counter-balance a hegemonic West. Finally, given China's expanded economic interest, it is in China's interest to foster a peaceful international environment (He, 2007: 43-56).

Chinese flexibility on the principle of sovereignty is not without limits (2007: 57). While flexibility gives China room for diplomacy in its relations with other great powers, it can potentially harm China's strategic interest with regard to Taiwan. Further, developing countries hold the principle of sovereignty highly as it protects them from meddling from great powers and China does not wish to jeopardise its relations with developing countries by taking the side of developed countries on the question of sovereignty (2007: 57).

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<sup>4</sup> Author's interview with He Yin, Beijing, China, October 18, 2009.

He corrects the perception that China does not have the capacity to carry out or increase its UNPKO engagements. The 2.3 million strong PLA and 1.7 million strong Chinese police force will not have problems preparing a few hundred peacekeepers with the necessary skills and language capabilities (2007: 65). Given the 'low tech' nature of peacekeeping missions, Chinese military technological capacity is more than capable of providing the necessary equipment.

After 2007, the significance of the Chinese presence to African security was no longer a matter for debate but a fact to be analysed. Taylor in his 2009 monograph dedicates a chapter to peacekeeping. He has also co-authored an article with Wu on Chinese contributions to peacekeeping in Africa (Wu and Taylor, 2011). Following Bellamy and Williams (2004), Taylor distinguishes five kinds of UNPKOs: traditional peacekeeping, transition management, wider peacekeeping, peace enforcement and peace support. He notes that African operations have involved managing transitions, wider peacekeeping, and peace support missions (Taylor, 2009). There is some misunderstanding of UN intervention on the part of Chinese scholars, Chinese hypersensitivity about intervention, and how this hard-line position is unrealistic given international relations between states in the postmillennium (Taylor, 2009). With reference to Lanteigne (2005), Taylor notes that as the Chinese economy has grown and its trade profile increased, the international community has come to expect Beijing to take a leadership role in international relations (Taylor 2009). Wu and Taylor observe that as Beijing has emerged as an economic superpower, it has been forced to change the direction of some aspects of its foreign policy (Wu and Taylor, 2011). As a result, China's position on UNPKOs has been normalized. Chinese concern about Western hegemony in Africa, as well as deep suspicion and mistrust between Western countries and China, mean that meaningful cooperation on UNPKOs is problematic.

In the Saferworld report *China's Growing Role in African Peace and Security* (2011), the authors note that China's position on UNPKOs has radically changed and that it now takes great pride in its contribution to African peace and security. Regarding the often criticised fact that China has supported the Sudan and Zimbabwe, the report notes this support was consistent with several voices on the African continent (2011: 71). The report commends Beijing's multilateral position as a response to African security challenges and

notes that the UNSC and other international initiatives will “never be fully effective and meaningful without the participation of China” (2011: 71). The authors comment that “[o]ne area of peace operations where China has yet to play a significant role is in peacebuilding, i.e. the use of a wider spectrum of security, civilian, administrative, political, humanitarian, human rights and economic tools and interventions to build the foundations for longer term peace in post-conflict countries” (2011: 80). Referring to Zhao’s unpublished manuscript and conference presentation, they note that China and Western countries have different understandings about what constitutes peacebuilding, with the West focusing on amending the constitution, holding an election, and establishing a multi-party system, whereas the Chinese believe poverty and unemployment reduction is most important (Saferworld, 2011: 80).

The International Crisis Group report, *China’s Growing Role in UN Peacekeeping* (2009) recognises China’s participation in UNPKOs as a welcome development given the shortage of peacekeepers. It recognises that greater participation on the part of China reflects Chinese foreign policy pragmatism. It also sees the suspicion of Chinese peacebuilding as primarily motivated by economic interests as superfluous, as the tension between the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and military and economic actors means there is no overall strategic approach to UNPKOs (International Crisis Group, 2009).

In a 2011 article, Zhau notes that China’s understanding of peacebuilding pays particular attention to development. Echoing other authors’ accounts of the motivations for Chinese engagements in UNPKOs, Zhau lists the following as motivations for Chinese participation. First, such engagements raise China’s international profile. Second, participation serves to bolster China’s relationship with the US and other Western governments. Third, participation protects Chinese interests abroad. On the issue of Chinese participation in peacebuilding operations, Zhau writes:

China spent almost 40 years seeking to understand, accept and trust the UN and its peacekeeping operations, to China the rapid changes and sensitive nature of peacebuilding exceeded its acceptance level, which inevitably resulted in China’s cautious attitudes towards peacebuilding. Yet along with the wider acceptance of

peacebuilding by many states, China is beginning to embrace it as a stake holder (Zhao, 2011: 350-351).

The Chinese position on peacebuilding is significant, as it signals China's transition from a norm follower to a norm maker. With reference to China's increasing attention to soft power and taking control of the 'discourse power' of international discourse, Zhao notes that Chinese leaders have begun to emphasise that China, as a great power, should constructively set agendas and not just follow others.

With regard to cooperation on the liberal peace, Zhao argues that China is limited in its cooperation because of the following. First, the principle of sovereignty limits Chinese latitude for interfering in domestic affairs. Second, there is a "distrustful stance by Western states", which will react defensively to overly eager Chinese participation (Zho, 2011: 354). Finally, China's peacebuilding policy is government-centric. While Chinese civil society has grown dramatically, it is largely ineffective in China's politics. According to Zhao, this is due to the government's restrictive policies on civil society and a Confucian culture that emphasises loyalty to the reigning authority. Zhao advises Western governments to respect the Chinese position and to avoid challenging China's core national interests if it wishes China to cooperate further on peace missions.

## **CONCLUSION**

This literature review began with an examination of the domestic sources of Chinese foreign policy making where it identified three discursive sources: formal, semi-formal and informal. It then described the discipline of Chinese foreign policy analysis, noting its roots in American policy think tanks and how there has been an uneasy relationship between Sinologists, historians and IR theorists. However, the maturation of the field has meant that the different disciplines have begun to merge and more recent publications on Chinese foreign policy analysis are incorporating specialist knowledge on China with greater theoretical rigour.

This chapter then reviewed literature on China-Africa and focused on the relatively small number of publications on China's security policy towards Africa and participation in

UNPKOs. The aim of the review has been to cover the range and trend of learned opinions expressed and to thus establish a framework for the discussion that will follow.

Within the discipline of Chinese foreign and security studies, the sub-field of Chinese African and security studies has been a neglected field. This review concurs with Stephen Chan's assessment of the current state of literature on Sino-Africa relations:

There is already a surfeit of poor and tentative scholarship on this issue [of China and Africa]... exoticism is precisely the hallmark of so much published work on China and Africa, especially in the USA, as Africanists who are not Sinologists and Sinologists who are not Africanists, and political scientists who are neither, stray as amateurs into fields other than their own (Chan, 2008: 339-340).

Of the China-Africa literature, we can see that the literature has seen two 'peaks' over the last fifty years, responding to heightened fear of Chinese activity and on the continent. The first peak was in the 1970s, when a good number of articles and monographs appeared analysing contemporary Chinese revolutionary fervour in Africa. The second peak began in around 2006, when the Forum on China Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) Beijing Summit was held with much fanfare. Comparing publications on Sino-Africa relations published in the 1970s with those published after 2006, certain major differences become evident: that post-2006 literature on Sino-Africa relations is generally not the product of sustained fieldwork in both China and Africa, that there is a tendency to neglect literature on Chinese foreign policy analysis, and the majority has scant, if any, reference to Chinese language sources. Regarding the general discourse of Sino-Africa relations, it is also important to note how 'history is repeating itself': a similar hysteria and Orientalism from the West regarding the Chinese 'threat' in Africa mark both the discourse of the early 1970s and that concerning the current Chinese emergence in Africa. Hysterical and incorrect observations by the popular press and some commentators that China is driven by a single motive (world revolution in the 1960s or scramble for resources today) and will be colonising Africa are discussed (and corrected) by Hutchinson, Ogunsanwo and Snow in their works and again thirty years later by Taylor, Brautigam and others. The tendency of Western commentators to see Africans as passive and without agency in their international relations,

and China as a singular monolith with ill intent follows the well-worn Orientalist tradition of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries, when Western colonisers sought to create and control the colonised.

Neglect of Chinese foreign policy literature and of literature published in the 1970s on China in Africa means that analysis of China's motivations in Africa is generalised and oversimplified. Authors such as Naidu, le Pere and Shelton frame their analysis in binary terms – whether China's emergence in Africa will lead to threat or opportunity. Given the multiple actors from China and the complex local situations in Africa, framing analyses in terms of “China” and “Africa” will almost inevitably lead to analysis without necessary nuance.

Literature on Chinese security engagements in Africa, and on Chinese participation in UNPKOs and peacebuilding, focuses on just one aspect of the PRC's engagement in Africa and therefore largely escapes the general critique that the analysis is too generalised. The principle of sovereignty is the key factor that determines Chinese engagement in UNPKOs. A great deal of painstaking research has been devoted to analysing Beijing's UNSC voting behaviour and in unpacking the array of domestic and international, and material and ideational, factors that motivate and limit Chinese participation in UNPKOs. The studies by Fravel, Stahle and Taylor are important in that they point out that it is not only Beijing's attitude to UNPKOs that is evolving – the nature of UNPKOs has itself undergone tremendous change since the early 1990s. A shortcoming in the existing literature is a lack of fieldwork assessment of the efficacy of Chinese engineering and transportation troops and medical units on the ground. While many authors note Beijing's desire to project an image of being a responsible great power, there is no assessment of whether China has been successful in its aim.

There is also a limited ideological perspective on the part of Gill and Huang, and to a lesser extent Saferworld and the International Crisis Group, in presuming that the current UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding regime is without serious problems. Gill and Huang, Saferworld and the International Crisis Group all commend Beijing for taking greater responsibility in participating in Western-led peacekeeping and the liberal peace, and ignore the fact that Beijing has its own assessment of intractable conflicts in Africa and does not agree that general elections and constitutional changes will lead to sustainable

peace. In other words, they are too eager to socialise Beijing to their neoliberal 'mainstream' view on peacebuilding in Africa and do not pause to consider that, as the most successful developing country in terms of economic growth and internal stability, the PRC might offer insights and norms, instead of merely manpower, to UNPKOs.

It is in the light of the shortcomings of the current literature on China-Africa relations that this thesis situates itself. The next chapter will seek to link developments in Chinese foreign policy analysis and IR theory to the understanding of China-Africa relations.

### **CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY OF DISCOURSE ANALYSIS**

The objective of this thesis is to explore and provide an explanatory account of the PRC's evolving policy on UNPKOs, security and peacebuilding engagements vis-à-vis Africa. It is upon this explanatory account of the evolving Chinese policy on peacekeeping and peacebuilding in Africa that the Chinese approach to peacebuilding – as a potential alternative to the liberal peace – can be identified and discussed.

The objective of this chapter is to establish the IR theoretical framework for understanding and analysing Beijing's African security policy. This thesis takes the position that a better and more comprehensive account of Beijing's African security policy can be had if the theoretical analytical framework is better able to account for China's evolving identity as it rises (Deng, 2008; Dittmer, 1991; Dittmer and Kim, 1993; Kim, 1998). While IR theoretical debates are outlined and discussed in this chapter and the methodology of discourse analysis is used in the remainder of this thesis, it is not the objective of this thesis to engage in IR theoretical and meta-theoretical debates.

This chapter is arranged as follows. First, the three major school of IR: realism, liberalism and constructivism will be outlined with attendant examples of their application in Chinese foreign policy analytical works. The three major schools of thought in accounting for China's foreign and security policy are presented and their strength and weaknesses discussed.<sup>5</sup> The discussion of the concept of discourse and discourse analysis will begin with Foucault, the founder of the practice of discourse analysis. Thereafter, Edward Said's example of Orientalism as a colonial discourse and Steve Biko's Black Consciousness philosophy as a counter-discourse to Oriental discourses will be discussed. The theoretical framework of this thesis is consistent with the tradition of discourse analysis set by Foucault, Said and Biko in that discourse analysis promotes critique and opens up space for alternative voices. In the final part of the chapter, Hansen's

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<sup>5</sup> In addition to the three major IR schools, there are numerous other schools of thought in IR not limited to the following: Marxist, the English School (liberal realism), feminist, post-colonialism, world systems theory, functionalism and geopolitics.



methodology of discourse analysis, specifically adapted for foreign policy analysis, will be presented.

### **CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS FROM REALIST PERSPECTIVE**

Realism posits some fundamental assumptions about the international system: states are the primary actors, they are rational and seek to maximize their interests, the international system is anarchic and there is no central authority capable of controlling state behaviour (Baylis and Smith, 2001: 302). Under the above circumstances, the *security dilemma* becomes inevitable. A security dilemma is “a structural notion in which the self-help attempts of states to look after their security needs tend, regardless of intention, to lead to rising insecurity for others as each interprets its own measures as defensive and measures of others as potentially threatening” (Herz, 1950: 151). Given the fact that there is no supranational authority to enforce agreements, “many steps perused by states to bolster their security have the effect – often unintended and unforeseen – of making other states less secure” (Jervis, 2001: 36). States may have no intention but to seek to bolster their own security, however, by bolstering and increasing their own security, other states will also need to increase their own security to balance the relative power between themselves and the other state(s) and this leads to a spiral of competing levels of increasing security (Jervis, 1978).

Neorealism, or structural realism, prioritizes the political structure of the international system in explaining political behaviour (Waltz, 1979).<sup>6</sup> Neorealism can be further divided into defensive and offensive realism. Defensive realism holds that the international system provides for state expansion only under certain conditions (Taliaferro, 2000, 2001; Waltz, 1979). Defensive realists argue that states ought to pursue moderate strategies as the best way to security and that under most circumstances the stronger state should communicate restraint through its military, foreign, economic and diplomatic strategies (Jervis, 1978; Waltz, 1987). Offensive realists argue that the presence of anarchy is an overpowering incentive for expansion as only the strongest state can consider itself secure (Huntington, 1993a; Mearsheimer, 1990; 2001).

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<sup>6</sup> For discussion on the differences between political realism and neorealism see Koehane, 1986.

Realism and the concept of the security dilemma underlie the China Threat Theory which is a dominant discourse in Western understandings of China's rise. For example, Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong of Singapore asserted, "In Asia, China's rising power and arms build up has stirred anxiety" (*New York Times*, July 7, 1995). In a 1995 *Time* article, Krauthammer compared China to Germany in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century, "a country growing too big and too strong for the continent it finds itself on" (*Time*, July 21, 1995). Using historical examples such as the rise of Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan and the subsequent World War, commentators such as Krauthammer predict China's rise as likely to lead to violent confrontation. In an article titled, "Why China's rise will not be peaceful", Mearsheimer argued that China's rise cannot be peaceful (2004). Outlining the assumptions of offensive realism and drawing on America's own historical experience of becoming a regional and then a global hegemon, he argues that China will seek hegemonic status in Asia. However, given that America will be unlikely to simply hand over its current hegemonic status in Asia, the rise of China will not be peaceful.

Whether China will threaten the US and its leadership of the current international order dominates literature on Chinese foreign policy analysis with the bulk of realists taking a pessimistic perspective (for example, see Christensen, 2001; Kristof, 1993).

## **LIBERALISM**

Liberals hold up China's ever increasing engagements with wide-ranging international organisations and its mutual dependence on the current globalised international trade system as an example that China is becoming part and parcel of the world. Focusing on the powers of democratization, economic interdependence and international institutions; liberals argue that as countries become increasingly democratic and socialised to the liberal world order, confrontations between them will become more unlikely (Doyle, 1997). The democratic peace theory postulates that democratic states do not go to war with one another and as more states become democratic, fewer wars will be fought. As a precursor to the democratic peace theory, Kant argued that republican states will not go to war because the majority will not vote to go to war, unless in self-defence (Kant, [1795] 2007). Even though it still has a long way to go, liberals point out that China has begun to liberalize and democratize (Pei, 1995). Economic development, contends liberals, brings with it

political liberalization and the rule of law (Friedberg, 2005). They point out that as the economic exchange between China and the outside world increase exponentially and as China opens its markets, the interest to avoid conflict increases proportionately. In addition, China's entry into and participation in international institutions such as the UN, and the World Trade Organization (WTO) tend to lead to better communications, reduced tensions and "a stake in the stability and continuity of the existing global order" (Friedberg, 2005: 14). Deudney and Ikenberry point out that an invasion by China of Taiwan is unlikely as it would pose too high an economic cost on the Chinese (2009). Further, they point out that the liberal international *status quo* is far more difficult to challenge today compared to the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. This is because the United States, in addition to being the hegemonic power, also stands as the leader of a coalition of liberal states.

Ross, a specialist on Chinese foreign policy, argues that Beijing is a 'conservative power' (2001). He points out that recent Chinese foreign policy has been striking in its "effort to consolidate regional trends and promote stability. In its politics towards Russia, North and South Korea, Thailand, Burma, and the countries of Indochina, Central Asia, and South Asia, China has emphasized co-operative measures to consolidate existing relationships rather than forceful measures to promote new patterns of relations" (2001: 34). Ross's observation is echoed by Lampton. Taking note of China's increasing military force, Lampton points out that "China's objective in the region is not to dictate outcomes so much as to prevent others in the region from undertaking activities that threaten core Chinese interests" (2008: 169). Ever increasing economic and institutional interdependence, such as China's accession to the WTO, though requiring proactive management, translates to reduced prospect of war between the US and China (Hormates, Economy and Nealer, 2001).

Liberals believe that the "mutually reinforcing causal mechanisms: economic interdependence, international institutions, and democratization" (Friedberg, 2005: 12), will ultimately lead to a peacefully rising China.

## **CONSTRUCTIVISM**

Neorealism and neoliberalism share the assumption that self-interested states are the primary actors in the international system, in this system states will learn and adapt to

maximize their security, therefore, questions of identity are not important (Wendt, 1992). While realism, neorealism and neoliberalism do recognize the role of identity, the fact that their theory is rationalist and they premise their theories on the assumption that states are rational, self-interested actors mean that the (shifting and evolving) identity of states are exogenously given and cannot have a satisfactory endogenous explanation (Johnston 2008; Wendt, 1992). Wendt argues that liberals who recognize that that co-operative behaviour is learnt and that states are thus transformed are unable to satisfactorily explain this as it privileges structure over process (Wendt, 1992). The major problem facing realist and liberal perspectives is their inability to incorporate the dynamics of identity issues in accounting for foreign policies.

In the terminology of Robert Cox, positivist theories such as realism and liberalism are problem-solving theories. Problem-solving theory “takes the world as it finds it, with the prevailing social and power relationship and the institutions into which they are organized, as the given framework for action” (Cox, 1986: 208). While critical theory asks how the social and power relationship came about.

The key difference between positivist (realism and liberalism) and post-positivists (constructivists, post-structuralist) is their standpoint on ontology. Ontologically, positivists hold that there is an independently existing world ‘out there’, independent of our sensing or knowing it. The statement that ‘there is a bridge at the eighteenth hole at the Old Course in St Andrews’ is true because it corresponds to the independent existence ‘in the real world’. For positivists, since there is an independent, existing, physical world, a statement is true when it correctly corresponds to the phenomenon in the world. On the other hand, post-positivists point out that while bridges have independent existence, the meanings of ideas such as ‘anarchy’, ‘terrorism’ or ‘danger’ are socially constructed. Noting that language and social interaction is central to the creation of meaning Onuf points out that, “people always construct, or constitute, social reality, even as their being, which can only be social, is constructed for them” (Onuf, 1989:1). Rather than taking identity as a given, constructivists focus on the social aspect of international relations and try to understand how the social produce and reproduce identity. Wendt’s argument for constructivism is as follows:

A world in which identities and interests are learned and sustained by intersubjectively grounded practice, by what states think and do, is one in which 'anarchy is what states make of it.' States may have made that system a competitive, self-help one in the past, but by the same token they might 'unmake' those dynamics in the future (Wendt, 1992: 183).

Since the 1980s, an increasing number of scholars have contributed to the emergence of constructivism in IR. Kratochwil, Ruggie and Onuf pointed out the importance of norms, regimes and legal reasoning (Kratochwil, 1989; Kratochwil and Ruggie 1986; Onuf 1989; Ruggie 1992and). Wendt brought the structural-agency debate into IR (1987). Shapiro argued that foreign policies actually were made by mobilizing particular political, racial and cultural identities (Shapiro, 1988). While constructivists hold in common a shared concern with identity- and interest-formation, there is a range of epistemological positions under the constructivist umbrella (Wendt, 1992). At the one end is the so-called 'conventional' constructivist associated with Wendt, Ruggie and Adler (Adler, 1997; Ruggie, 1992; Wendt, 1999). At the other end are post-structuralists who reject the possibility of objective knowledge and assert, as it were: 'it is interpretation all the way down' (Campbell, 1998; Hansen, 2006).

Conventional constructivists remain wedded to the mainstream IR research agenda in that they focus on the relations of states and problems of cooperation and conflict. Conventional constructivists do not reject the assumptions of rationalism. They think that researchers should be looking for communities of intersubjectivity in international politics where there is common understanding within specific context. In terms of the question of how the researcher can know, Wendt asserted that, "when it comes to the epistemology of social inquiry I am a strong believer in science – a pluralistic science to be sure, in which there is a significant role for "Understanding," but science just the same. I am a "positivist" (Wendt, 1999, 39).

Keohane, framing the argument between rationalists versus reflectivists, argued that critical theorists need to meet empiricist standards concerning research agendas, hypothesis construction and testing (Keohane, 1988 noted by Campbell, 1998: 211). The problem with Keohane's criticism is that he takes the position of being both referee and

player, presuming that empiricist standards are objective and neutral and thereby imposing rationalist and positivist standards on post-positivists (Campbell, 1998: 211).

Post-structuralism challenges the rationalist epistemology held by positivists and conventional constructivists. Influenced by Nietzsche, Foucault and Derrida, post-structuralists hold that IR is not a free-standing discourse and it needs to be seen in the context of Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment thought. Noting 'scientific research' that supported colonialism and racism in the past, they reject the possibility of objectivity and point out that empirical research methodologies are themselves embedded within structural power. Meaning is created and not an objective given and it reflects power structures. Rejecting the existence of objective truth, they assert that the post-structuralist project in IR is to offer critique. Quoting Foucault, Campbell notes the aim of post-structuralism is to critique:

A critique is not a matter of saying that things are not right as they are. It is a matter of pointing out on what kinds of assumptions, what kinds of familiar, unchallenged, unconsidered modes of thought the practices that we accept rest"(Foucault, 1988: 154-55 quoted by Campbell, 1998: 191)

Campbell suggests that the aim of post-structuralism is to promote critique as a form of intervention and to make political that which has been excluded (Campbell, 1998: 227). Noting that all theoretical approaches have strengths and weaknesses, Hansen holds that post-structuralism's strength lies in the "constitutive significance of representations of identity for formulating and debating foreign policies" (2003: 5).

## **CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS AND IR THEORY**

As pointed out in chapter two, the field of Chinese foreign policy analysis has begun to approach Chinese foreign policy analysis by combining the expertise of an area specialist and utilizing the most up-to-date IR theoretical framework.

*Critique of realist accounts of Chinese foreign policy*

A leading Chinese foreign policy specialist, Kim takes issue with positivist IR frameworks for their inadequacy in accounting for post-Cold War Chinese foreign policy. In particular, Kim critiques Waltz's structural (defensive) realist theory (Waltz, 1979). He points out that realism has failed to predict the peaceful end of the Cold War and bipolarity and that structural realism's assumption of anarchy fails to explain why and how Beijing identifies friends and foes and the impact such identifications have on its foreign policy behaviour as well as on the international structure (Kim, 1998: 18).

The example of the Sino-Soviet split is often used to illustrate the failure of realism's balance-of-power theory in understanding Chinese foreign policy (Johnston, 1998b; Kim, 1998;). Realist explanations that only focus on external factors fail to account for why China broke away from the Soviet Union at a time when it was also threatened by the hegemonic US.

Chinese foreign policy specialists Deng Young and Wang Fei-Ling also reject structural realism in accounting for China's emergence in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (Deng and Wang, 2005). They argue that the state's motivation matters and that accounting for it is critical to understanding Chinese foreign policy. Deng point out that the PRC has already experienced a major shift of power in its favour in the international arena, yet that there has been no hostile action to restore the original balance as structural realism predicted. Instead, China and the US are constantly engaged in "crisis management" that stabilises their relationship (Deng, 2008: 6-7). Deng and Wang argue that structural realists' assumption that all states' motivations are "identical, uninteresting, and can be safely assumed and that ultimately intentions are too uncertain to matter" is incorrect (Deng and Wang, 2005: 1). They argue that Beijing's motivations are complex and are critical to understanding Chinese foreign relations, as well as great power relations surrounding China's rise (Deng and Wang, 2005: 1). Besides being unable to explain China's peaceful rise thus far, realism also cannot account for Beijing's great reluctance to become more engaged in African security matters.

From a security policy perspective, realism and deterrence theory argue that establishing a reputation for power is central in a state's security policy (Deng, 2006: 188). If Beijing is interested in maximising its power, as realism assumes, then it should welcome other nations expressing fear at China's reputation as a coloniser in Africa! China's anger

about being described as a new colonial power in Africa may, however, be explained by the fact that China does not want to be perceived as too strong, as this would provoke other states to defensive action.

### *Critique of Liberal accounts of Chinese foreign policy*

Liberals point out China's increasing engagements with international organisations such as the UN and the WTO and its ever deeper engagement with them provides evidence of China being increasingly socialized to the liberal international norms. Importantly, China's evolving stance on UNPKOs, closely connected with its traditional stance on sovereignty, is continually influenced and redefined as China becomes ever more part and parcel of the UNSC decision-making process. In the case of UNPKO participation, China has evolved from the position of a delinquent exile prior to 1971, a fierce critic in the 1970s and a non-participant in the 1980s. China has gradually evolved to become a major contributor to UNPKOs today. Not only is China contributing materially to UNPKOs, notably it has also begun to proactively and publicly lobby host nations to accept UN peacekeeping forces, as was the case in Darfur (Holslag, 2007).

However, liberalism has been unable to incorporate domestic and ideational factors within China when accounting for China's increasingly cooperative international behaviour. In addition it tends to place too much emphasis on utopian ideals and economic interdependence (Buzan, 2010). As an example of liberalism's limitations, it has struggled to account for the continuation of poor relations between China and Japan despite deep and ever increasing economic interdependence between the two (Hughes, 2009).

### *The importance of identity and norms in understanding Chinese foreign policy*

Kim identifies the two major issues shaping post-Cold War Chinese foreign policy to be identity and norms.

On identity, he writes, "[p]art of the problem relates to the wrenching national identity difficulties that practically all major powers encounter in trying to adjust to a world in which conflict no longer takes place along an East-West divide" (1998: 3). Expanding on the problem, Kim notes the evolving identity struggle that China is going through, he points out the transition from the Cold War to post-Cold War global order is



throwing up profound uncertainties about China's emerging role in international affairs (1998: 3). On norms, Kim points out that international norms affect China in two ways. First, international norms "[define] the terms of the international discourse or negotiations in which states seek to justify their policy or action" (1998: 20). Secondly, with China's growing participation in multilateral regimes, a more solid empirical base can be used to test various theories on why China accepts some norms yet rejects others (1998: 21).

Approaching the problem of analysing and accounting for China's foreign policy, Deng examines Chinese foreign policy in terms of China's "struggle for status" (2008). Deng points out that the Chinese are intensely sensitive to their nation's "international status" [*guoji diwei*]; that the Chinese are discontented with the world order; and that China has to struggle to overcome material, social and political barriers to fulfil its great power aspirations (2008: 8). For Deng, the FOCAC summit in Beijing in November 2006 brought Africa back "to the centre stage" of China's foreign policy stratagem (2008: 227). Deng argues that by 2006 the concept of the Third World as the foundation to an "international united front" against the superpowers had lost its relevance. Instead, the FOCAC summit reflected China's economic reach and its emergence as "a new global power" (2008: 227).

There are numerous examples of Chinese frustration with its status in the international order. A good example is Beijing's exclusion from the UN prior to 1971 and its subsequent attempt to carve an alternative international space for itself in the Third World through the Bandung Conference (Bloomfield, 1966; Weng, 1966). More recently, the G8 invited President Hu Jintao to attend G8 meetings in 2003, 2005, 2006 and 2007. This was necessary because China's economic clout means that it needs to be involved in global issues related to financial stability, Third World development, and the global trade regime (Deng, 2008: 81). However, the G8, which is dominated by Western democratic powers, was not ready to invite China to join it. And, at the same time, China is not eager to join a Western dominated group (Deng, 2008: 81).

The emerging consensus in Chinese foreign analysis circles is that positivist IR theories that only focus on external factors and ignore identity and normative factors cannot provide a satisfactory account of Chinese foreign policy. It is only by taking issues

of identity and norms seriously and making them the centre of the analytical focus can explanations of evolving Chinese foreign policy be had.

## **WHY ARE POST-STRUCTURALISM AND DISCOURSE ANALYSIS CHOSEN AS THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY FOR THIS THESIS?**

While conventional constructivism and post-structuralism hold in common that social realities are socially constructed and that identities and norms need to be at the centre of analysis, their epistemological approaches in accounting for international relations are quite different. By accepting the assumptions of positivist IR, conventional constructivism associated with Wendt has an inconsistency in that it marries a positivist epistemology with a post-positivist social ontology. In addition, Wendt's actors do not speak and the theory is missing the theoretical role for language (Zehfuss, 1992).

From a post-colonial perspective, the West has long portrayed Africa as the 'hopeless continent' and China as a 'threat'. In deconstructing these orientalist identities it is important that the status-quo discursive domain where Western norms and Western social science methodology as objective, neutral and universal be challenged. Conventional constructivism may be adequate in deconstructing the identity of 'hopeless Africa' or China Threat; but it assumes unreflectively that it is doing so from a neutral and objective standpoint.

### *Discourse*

Foucault was the first to put forward a comprehensive discussion of the concept of discourse. He regarded social structures as inherently ambiguous and contingent systems of meaning. In his *Archaeology of Knowledge* published in 1969, Foucault defines discourse as "a body of anonymous, historical rules, always determined in the time and space that have defined a given period, and for a given social, economic, geographical, or linguistic area, the conditions of operation of the enunciative function" (2002: 131). For Foucault, discourse serves the function of legitimating and producing power relations. It is through discourse that the powerful assert the truth and the less powerful are excluded.

### *Orientalism as discourse*

Foucault's notion of a discourse was employed by the post-colonial writer Said to understand Orientalism as a discourse. Understanding Orientalism as a discourse means

[to] understand the enormously systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage –and even produce – the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post-enlightenment period (Said, 1991:3).

Published in 1978, Said's *Orientalism*, which deconstructs the system of discursive power utilised during the colonial era, is a good example of discourse analysis. A major point Said makes is that the Orient was not so much discovered but "submitted to being – made Oriental" (Said, 1985: 6). The essential truth about the Orientals, supported by the authority established by generations of scholars, professors, and colonial administrators, was that the Oriental was irrational, depraved, childlike and different. In contrast, the European was considered rational, virtuous, mature, "normal" (Said, 1985: 40). It is through the Otherness of the Oriental, that the West is able to contrast and make its own identity. By creating the identity of an Other – the Oriental – the West is also defining itself. Importantly, the creation of such identities also legitimates the colonial relationship between the West and the Orient. Because the Oriental is irrational and childlike, the West must take command and control the Orient. In essence, the colonial project is legitimated through the discourse of Orientalism. Said quotes Lord Cromer's *Political and Literary Essays*, written in 1913, as an example:

To be more explicit, what is meant when it is said that the commercial spirit should be under some control is this – that in dealing with Indians or Egyptians, or Shilluks, or Zulus, the first question is to consider what these people, who are all, nationally speaking, more or less *in statu pupillari*... (Cromer, as quoted in Said, 1985: 37)

Lord Cromer's quotation illustrates the 'creation' of the orient as the Other, in the same way that Mandela is 'created' or 'constructed' as either a terrorist or a freedom fighter. The Oriental is described as *in statu pupillari* (under guardianship), thus requiring the guidance of a European. In this way the discourse of Orientalism defines the identities of both the

Oriental and the European, and also legitimates the policy of colonialism – given that the Oriental is irrational and naïve, he will need the guidance of the European.

As a discourse, Orientalism not only defines identities, it also legitimates policies and relationships between the identities it creates. The discourse of Orientalism not only constituted laws or anthropological scholarship, Orientalism could be

discussed and analysed as the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient – dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient(Said, 2002: 3).

Underlying discourse is power: the power to create the Other, to dominate, restructure and have authority over. While Orientalism was the dominant discourse during colonialism, there have also been counter-discourses, such as post-colonial discourse, where the formally silent colonised asserts her viewpoint and challenges the dominant discourse. The Black Consciousness Movement founded by Steve Biko, a South African student leader in the 1970s, is an example of a post-colonial counter-discourse. The Black Consciousness Movement was notable in its refusal to engage with what it saw as a white monopoly on truth. Biko saw Apartheid as an artificial creation, writing that:

[w]e have to find out whether our position is a deliberate creation by God or an artificial fabrication of the truth by power-hungry people whose motive is authority, security, wealth and comfort. In other words, the “Black Consciousness” approach would be irrelevant in a colourless and non-exploitative egalitarian society. It is relevant here because we believe that an anomalous situation is a deliberate creation of man.(1978: 87)

By challenging the discourse of Apartheid, which constructed the blacks in South Africa as naturally different (and inferior) to the whites and the idea that separate development was necessary, Biko challenged the ‘truth’ asserted by the dominant discourse that legitimated and bolstered Apartheid. The deconstruction of Orientalism and Apartheid by Said and

Biko illustrates the fluidity of 'truth' when viewed from a post-positivist position. Because there is no objective 'out there', truth is always contestable. The task of the foreign policy analyst is to examine the dynamics of this contest and explore the reasons why different 'truths' are asserted and how foreign policies are legitimated.

As this thesis focuses on examining and explaining the shifting identities in the relationship between Africa and China, it cannot take for granted that it is taking place in, is shaped by and is actively challenging an international society and a set of international norms that is created and dominated by the West. The shortcoming of conventional constructivism is that it remains silent and unreflective on the supposed objectivity and neutrality of its theoretical assumptions and methodological design.

## **DISCOURSE ANALYSIS**

From a post-structuralist standpoint, foreign policy is discourse. A discourse is material and ideational as well as social (Hansen, 2006). Foreign policy is not produced in isolation but it is a part of the 'back and forth' of contesting discourses in the international arena.

At the centre of the post-structuralist IR agenda is the relationship between identity and policy. Foreign policies rely on representations of identity. At the same time, identities are produced and reproduced through the formulation of foreign policy (Hansen, 2006: 1). A post-positivist understanding of identity differs from liberal or conventional constructivist understandings in that the identity of the state is not understood as independent of the discursive practices of implementing and presenting foreign policy (Hansen, 2006: 1). Given that identity is not independent of policy, it is impossible for identity to be a separate causal variable when one examines foreign policy.

### *Identity*

Foreign policy will be meaningless if the situation and objects within it have no identity. For example, the Clinton administration represented the Bosnian War as the 'Balkan' War, in which two barbaric peoples had been fighting each other for at least 500 years. Therefore the war was seen as an intractable "problem from hell" which the West did not have the means to solve (Hansen, 2006: 6).

For Hansen, identity is both discursive and political. This means that “representations of identity place foreign policy issues within a particular interpretative optic” (Hansen, 2006: 6). Identities do not have an independent existence outside the discursive realm; they are continuously rearticulated and contested by competing discourses (Hansen, 2006: 6). Not only is identity a social and political production, the production of identity is also relational in that the identity is only possible with reference to a series of others. Hansen accounts for the complexities of different others and different degrees of otherness in her analysis of identity and the state.

Political leaders legitimate themselves by *securitising* the other. The other is intrinsically evil, irrational, abnormal, monstrous, dangerous or anarchical (Campbell, 1992: 55; Connolly, 1991: 65). Or, as Edward Said frames it, the other is portrayed as exotic, different, mysterious yet attractive. However, the concept of the other need not always be the radical other. There can be less radical others. For example, one may observe as ‘other’ the Nordic identity constructed by Swedish, Danish and Norwegian politicians during the Cold War, an identity which centred on neutrality, disarmament, development and peacekeeping (Hansen, 2006: 39; Joenniemi, 1990). The extension of Othering discourses to include more, and less radical, ‘others’ is a very useful analytical tool for understanding the Chinese in Africa. By constructing a *friendship bridge* in Africa, without the fuss of preconditions that a Western donor demands, China is ascribing meaning and identity to itself. The message in naming the bridge a ‘friendship bridge’ in a post-colonial African country is that the PRC is an efficient and capable partner which does not assume a superior position, unlike the dictating Western other. China’s self-identification as a ‘non-interfering, equal partner’ in Africa is performed in a specific political, relational and social context. The context is that of post-colonial Africa, which is still on the economic and political periphery. It is in this post- and neo-colonial context that China creates its identity.

Official foreign policy announcements are not made in political, social or historical vacuums. When an official policy is presented, identity is always employed in legitimating it. The decision-makers are situated in the broader “political and public sphere” and their decisions are the consequence of wider representations articulated by “individuals, institutions and media outlets” (Hansen, 2006: 7). Top politicians rely upon advisors, background literature and the media to establish a ‘representational framing of policy’ and

are 'speaking back' when they present what is the 'proper representation' of the particular foreign policy issue. For example, the sending of a special envoy to Sudan directly after the film director Steven Spielberg's withdrawal as the Olympics Opening Ceremony Arts Director in early 2008 could be seen as China 'speaking back' and contesting the narrative that China was supporting a genocidal regime in Khartoum (*New York Times*, April 12, 2007).

By situating official foreign policy and discourse in a wider discursive text, and examining how representations of identity are either reinforced or contested by political oppositions, academia, popular culture and media, one is able to study how official foreign policy comes to be what it is (Hansen, 2006: 8).

### *Language*

Post-structuralism understands language as *social*; that is, language is not a private affair but a collection of social codes and conventions that each individual uses to make himself understood. One learns that the sound of 'table' refers to the object on which one has one's meal. This social nature of language also applies to political discourse, when words and phrases such as 'democracy', 'good governance' or 'rule of law' are uttered. To understand language as *political* is to understand language as 'a site' for the production and reproduction of particular subjectivities and identities. With the productions of an identity, other identities are excluded. It is the recognition that language is the site for production and reproduction of identities that explains why discourse analysis focuses on language and text. Texts are "unique and united: each makes its own particular construction of identity, weaves a series of differentiations and juxtapositions, and couples them to a spatially, temporally, and ethically situated foreign policy" (Hansen, 2006: 55). In analysing discourse, the meaning is never fully given in the text: texts make references to previous texts and themselves mediate meanings for others. The process whereby the meaning of a text is always a product of other texts and interpretations is known as *intertextuality* (Hansen, 2006: 55; Kristeva, 1980). The concept of intertextuality highlights that texts are situated "within and against other texts" and that they draw upon other texts in constructing identities and policies (Hansen, 2006: 55). Foreign policy texts are intertextually linked across official policies, media reports, speeches and interviews. Texts

are not independent entities, but are located within a larger textual web – a web that includes journalism, academic writing, popular non-fiction and even fiction (Hansen, 2006: 55). When a foreign policy text makes reference to older texts, it both constructs legitimacy for itself and reproduces the legitimacy of the old text.

In a realist paradigm, the world is ‘out there’, comprised of independently existing physical objects, such as trees and houses, which have intrinsic causal powers. Realists focus on language “as a structured system in its own right” and the task of discourse analysis is to “unravel the conceptual elisions and confusions by which language enjoys its power” (Parker, 1992: 1). Marxists share underlying realist assumptions about independently existing physical objects. Their emphasis is on the processes of economic production and reproduction. As such, discourses are seen as ideological systems that legitimate and justify the uneven distribution of economic resources. The task of discourse analysis is to expose these systems of exploitation and propose alternatives (Althusser, 1969; Howarth, 2000; Zizek, 1994).

Post-structuralist perspectives embrace language as the ‘constitutive’ element of what is brought into being. It is only through their construction in language that “objects, subjects, states, living beings, and material structures – are given meaning and endowed with particular identity” (Hansen, 2006: 18). The classic split between the nominal and the phenomenal is rejected by the post-structuralist. For the classic realist, a tank is simply a machine for war and constitutes a country’s military power. From a post-structuralist perspective, a tank does not have meaning in and of itself, independent of its wider social and political context. The meaning of the tank is situated within a discourse – it may be a machine for war, a museum piece, or part of a UN peacekeeping force.

#### *The methodology of discourse analysis*

A significant development of Hansen’s methodology is that she argues that there can be different degrees of differentiation, and that the Other can even be considered to be superior. She is therefore able to develop an analytical framework through which these identity constructions can be studied. This development is especially useful given that there are various different others with different degrees of differentiation in the China-Africa discourse.



The method of discourse analysis begins by identifying terms that indicate a construction of the other, terms such as 'evil', 'dictator' or 'terrorist', thereafter, construction of the self as 'good', 'civilised' and 'attacked' is performed (Hansen, 2006: 42). Secondly, in analysing discourse, it is necessary to identify the dual process of linking and differentiation. As "meaning and differentiation are constructed through a series of signs that are linked to each other to constitute relations of sameness as well as through a differentiation to other series of juxtaposed signs" (Hansen, 2006: 42). In the case of the PRC's discourse, the construction of a common colonial history with Africa is a construction of sameness that both identifies the commonality between the Chinese and Africans at the same time as it differentiates and produces the Western, colonial other.

In relation to the 'web of signs' from which identities are constructed, three qualifiers should be noted (Hansen, 2006: 44). First, one's own identity is always relationally constructed. For example, the PRC creates itself either as sharing a common history of colonial exploitation with Africa, or as the victim of colonisation in relation to the West – the radical other. Second, basic discourses can be so well-entrenched that no detailed reference is needed. For example, Africa's identity as hopeless is so well-entrenched that there is no need to explain why aid is needed. Third, there is 'discursive disappearance', whereby identities articulated at one time may cease to be important. For example, world revolution has disappeared from Chinese discourse with the Africans.

### *Intertextuality and research design*

Official foreign policy text does not stand alone. It draws on previous texts for legitimacy and is only meaningful within a wider foreign policy debate. Besides official policy, there are also oppositional political discourses from opposition parties, civil society, and even foreign governments (Hansen, 2006: 61). In the case of China's Africa policy, oppositional political discourses come from Western governments, NGOs and the media. By considering oppositional discourses, one is able to assess the hegemony of the official discourse, as well as the relationship between the government and opposing voices. Among media discourses, there are editorials/official statements, opinion pieces and news reports. It is important to see which critical opinions are given space by major media outlets. Corporate institutions, such as powerful NGOs, think tanks and public campaigns with the aim of

influencing government policy, should also be included in discourse analysis (Hansen 2006: 62).

### *Basic discourse as analytical construct*

Foreign policy discourses are analytical constructions “through which the construction and linking of identity and policy can be studied” (Hansen, 2006: 51). While each individual text or speech constitutes identity by differentiating and linking, foreign policy debates are constructed around themes. In order to examine a foreign policy debate, it is analytically useful to identify basic discourses which “construct different Others with different degrees of radical difference; articulate radically diverging forms of spatial, temporal, and ethical identity; and construct competing links between identity and policy” (Hansen, 2006: 52). Analytically, “basic discourses point to the main points of contestation within a debate and facilitate a structured account of the relationship between discourses, their points of convergence and confrontations; how discourses develop over time in response to events, facts and criticisms; and how discursive variations evolve” (Hansen, 2006: 52).

Hansen offers the following methodological guidelines for identifying basic discourses:

- a) Basic discourses should be established from reading a wide range of sources.
- b) Basic discourse should be built on explicit articulations of key representations of identity. These key representations can be geographical identities, historical analogies, striking metaphors or political concepts.
- c) Once the basic discourse is identified, the conceptual history of the representations chosen can be drawn upon. Current representations may not completely cohere with past representations, but will relate to the past. A genealogical reading which traces the constitution of the present concept back to history allows one to understand when and how it was formed, as well as how well it has managed to marginalise other representations.

- d) Given that basic discourses articulate very different selves and others, very different foreign policies will be articulated by them.
- e) From a dynamic perspective, one basic discourse will be argued relatively quickly while other basic discourses will be placed in opposition and in response to this first basic discourse (Hansen, 2006: 51-54).

Hansen suggests that one looks at a framework that includes larger political and media debates when identifying basic discourses. One would then identify a smaller number of structuring *basic discourses* which construct different others with different degrees of radical difference; articulate radically diverging forms of spatial, temporal, and ethical identity; and construct competing links between identity and policy (Hansen, 2006: 52). The value of basic discourse as an analytical tool is that it provides a lens through which different representations and policies can be analysed as systematically connected and key disagreements of competing discourses can be identified. Current representations have to be related to past representations. A genealogical reading, in the Foucauldian sense, is important, as the tracing of the constitution of the present concept allows one to understand when and how it was formed and “how it succeeded in marginalising other representations” (Hansen, 2006: 53).

The two basic discourses identified in this thesis are: the Third World discourse and the great power discourse. These articulate radically different constructions of spatial, temporal and ethical identity for the Chinese. The Third World discourse constructs Chinese policy in Africa as linked to issues of imperial intervention and the need for mutual support and alliance. The great power discourse legitimates the Chinese policy of establishing FOCAC, co-ordinating Sino-Africa cooperation, championing African causes in South–North dialogue, and increasing involvement in UNPKOs. One of the most consistent representations of identity articulated by the PRC is its membership of the Third /developing world (Van Ness, 1993; 1998). Beijing has consistently referred to the Century of Humiliation and the history of colonialism it shares with other post-colonial countries (Deng, 2008; Scott, 2008). On the other hand, indignation against the West as a result of the Century of Humiliation is due to China’s imperialist past, during which it was itself a

great power. When Mao declared, at the founding of the PRC in 1949, that “China has stood up”, and the CCP resorted to nationalism to legitimate its rule, Mao and the CCP aimed to restore China’s great power status. Further argumentation will be forwarded in the next chapter on choosing great power and Third World country as the two basic discourses.

## CONCLUSION

The purpose of this chapter is to review and examine different IR theoretical perspectives so that the puzzle of China’s increasing participation in UNPKOs and emerging peacebuilding practice in Liberia can be explained. The evolution of the PRC’s policy on UNPKOs in Africa is a case of China’s foreign policy in flux. In terms of traditional positivist IR theoretical frameworks, Beijing’s security engagements in Africa and its increasing participation in UNPKOs in UNMIL are perplexing. On the one hand, Beijing is openly critical of the liberal peace and is outspoken against Western imposition of multiparty democratic governance – describing it as neo-colonial interference in the domestic affairs of sovereign countries (*People’s Daily*, January 14, 2008). On the other hand, the PRC has the largest number of troops in UNPKOs of the five permanent members of the UNSC (*United Nations Peacekeeping*, 2011). If Beijing is against interventionism and views it as neo-colonial interference in domestic affairs, and if the UNPKO is predominantly a liberal project, why has Beijing become such an active participant in UNPKOs in recent years?

In trying to account for this anomaly, this chapter has reviewed the three major schools of IR and made a case for post-structural discourse analysis for examining the PRC’s evolving policy on UNPKOs in Africa. I argued that the unpredictability of China’s foreign and security policy is better accounted for by using post-positivist IR theories that focus on identity and norms in its analysis of Chinese foreign policy. In addition, discourse analysis is chosen instead of conventional constructivism because the former promotes critique as a form of intervention, opens up space for alternatives and recognises the impossibility of objectivity and neutrality.

It was not by accident that China was constructed as a threat to the world and a new colonial power in Africa. This construction of China has provoked an angry response (and a counter-discourse) from Beijing (*The Times*, November 9, 2009).

In the next chapter, the theoretical insights and methodology discussed above will be put in to practice in examining how the identities are produced and reproduced.



## **CHAPTER FOUR: THE BASIC DISCOURSES IN THE DEBATES ON CHINA IN AFRICA**

The objective of this thesis is to explore, and provide an explanatory account of the PRC's evolving policy on UNKPOs and security engagements vis-à-vis Africa. It is upon this explanatory account of the evolving Chinese policy on Africa and African peacekeeping and peacebuilding that the Chinese approach to peacebuilding – as a potential alternative to the liberal peace – can be identified and discussed.

Analysts of Chinese foreign policy often express exasperation at the task of interpreting Beijing's foreign policy (Deng, 2008; Kim, 1998). On the one hand, there are righteous declarations of principles; on the other hand, there are flexible and pragmatic adaptations. Summing up their collective exasperation at making sense of Beijing's foreign policy, Kim remarks that "China's tendency to be all things to all states on all global issues have seemed designed to challenge scholars and policymakers concerned about the shape of things to come in post-Cold War international life" (1998: 4). In chapter three, I concurred with the school of thought in Chinese foreign policy analysis led by Kim, Dittmer, Yong and others that the PRC's foreign policy can be better analysed and understood by examining it in terms of its identity struggle as it rises. Accordingly, the objective of this chapter is to identify, explain and account for two basic discourses that are central to China's identity struggle. By identifying and examining the struggle and contestation between these two identities, I hope to explain Chinese policy towards Africa and approach to peacebuilding.

Hansen's methodology is chosen firstly because the analytical focus of her post-structuralist theoretical framework is on the relationship between identity and foreign policy – precisely the area that Chinese foreign policy scholars have identified as one that needs to be explored. Secondly, Hansen has devised a rigorous methodology for foreign policy discourse analysis (Hansen, 2006). Thirdly, in the existing studies on China in Africa, Sino-Africa relations, and China's evolving policy on UNPKOs, almost all the commentary examines developments from an explicitly or implicitly realist paradigm. This is in spite of developments in post-Cold War IR theory and a general dissatisfaction with the realist paradigm expressed by scholars of Chinese foreign policy (Kim, 1998). In chapter three, a summary of Hansen's methodology for foreign policy discourse analysis was set out. This

chapter will build on the previous chapter and identify the two basic discourses that will be used to analyse China's evolving policies on African security and UNPKOs. It will form the foundation for the next chapters on examinations of the emergent Chinese approach to peacebuilding in Liberia.

The chapter is arranged as follows. It will begin with an identification and explanation of the two discourses, expanding on the origins of these discourses and how they impact on the analysis. Thereafter, genealogies of the two constructions will be expanded on in turn. Finally, a discussion of how the two discourses have competed and evolved will be discussed.

### **IDENTIFYING THE TWO BASIC DISCOURSES: CHINA AS A GREAT POWER AND CHINA AS THIRD WORLD COUNTRY**

Hansen points out that basic discourses identify the main convectors of discussions. Basic discourses ask how competing discourses articulate the relationship between self and other through various identities and how they relate to foreign policy. For Hansen, "basic discourses point to the main points of contestation within a debate and facilitate a structured account of the relationship between discourses, their points of convergence and confrontations; how discourses develop over time in response to events, facts and criticisms; and how discursive variations evolve" (2006: 52). Following Hansen's methodological guidelines (see chapter three, 83-84), the two constructions are arrived at by reading a wide range of sources, built on explicit and striking articulations of these identities. They have a traceable genealogical past, and articulate very different self and other.

The first basic discourse – "China as a great power" – is an identity constructed by the West, which sees China as a threat and in a negative light. The second construction – "China as a Third World country" – is an identity constructed by Beijing *in response* to the first construction.

The binary construction of two radically different Chinese identities – China as a great power (therefore threat) and China as a Third World country (therefore not a threat) are not and cannot be absolutely clearly defined. Nor are these two basic discourses



always consistently expressed at all times and different variations have evolved over time. Nor are they necessarily the only basic discourses on China's Africa policy.

For example, East and South East Asian countries as well as African countries have at various times expressed alarm at China's emergence and at others solidarity with China as a fellow Third World country. At the same time, while the China Threat thesis is popular, some West-based scholars have pointed out that China's rise is far from certain and that in fact it will soon collapse (Chang, 2001; Goldstone, 1995). Within China, there are nationalist voices proposing a more assertive Chinese posture in world affairs. However, despite various inconsistencies and fluidity of the two contesting discourses over time and despite these discourses being voiced by different peoples in different variations, the two basic discourses are the most prominently and repeatedly expressed in official discourse and by top Chinese, African and Western politicians. The historical consistency of the two discourses offer analytically the most useful anchor points from which to examine China's identity struggle as identified by Kim and others.

Other discourses, such as China Collapse theory from radical commentators in the West or more nationalistic voices from the informal sector of Chinese foreign policy discourse (see page 36) do not have the historical consistency, formal political backing, or radical Othering that provokes a major counter discourse.

Table 4.1 below highlights the major differences between the two discourses.

	<b>China as great power (China Threat)</b>	<b>China as Third World country (Peaceful development)</b>
<b>Constructed by</b>	The West. Politicians: Kaiser Wilhelm II; Jack Straw (UK foreign secretary); Hilary Clinton (US Secretary of State). Academics: Huntington; Mearsheimer.	The CCP government

	Also by: neighboring countries: Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, India, Vietnam etc..	
<b>In response to</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The Mongolian hoards</li> <li>b. Asian immigration to the US, Australia, South Africa, etc.</li> <li>c. Chinese state owned companies in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century</li> <li>d. Chinese immigration to Africa</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Opposition to Soviet revisionism (1960-1989)</li> <li>b. Opposition to US imperialism (1949-1971)</li> <li>c. China Threat Theory (since 1990s)</li> </ul>
<b>Self</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Occidental</li> <li>b. Christian</li> <li>c. Civilized</li> <li>d. Democratic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. victim of Century of Humiliation</li> <li>b. Communist</li> <li>c. Oppressed</li> <li>d. Leader of the Third World</li> <li>e. Peaceful Rise / Development</li> </ul>
<b>Other</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Yellow Peril</li> <li>b. Red China</li> <li>c. Communist threat</li> <li>d. Totalitarianism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Imperialism</li> <li>b. Colonialism</li> <li>c. Hegemonism</li> </ul>
<b>Variations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. China as a threat to the Asia-Pacific; South East Asia, Central and South Asia</li> <li>b. China as a threat to human rights and democracy</li> <li>c. China as a supporter of dictatorships in Angola,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. China as a leading country of the Bandung Conference</li> <li>b. Third World Alliance</li> <li>c. China as the largest developing country and Africa having the largest number of developing</li> </ul>

	Zimbabwe, Sudan. d. China as new colonial power in Africa	countries ( <i>China's Africa          Policy</i> , 2006) d. China in BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) group
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Table 4.1

## CHINA AS A GREAT POWER DISCOURSE

Western construction of the Chinese began with the testimony of land travelers (Lach, 1965: 730; Polo, 1958). Fantastic descriptions by Marco Polo and others of the existence of a superior empire in the East – which could produce silk and porcelain that could not be imitated in Europe (Lach, 1965) – took hold in the Western imagination. The Portuguese were the first Europeans to establish a direct sea link and have regular contact with the Chinese. The Portuguese establishment of Macao in 1555 as a trading station meant regular news about China began to flow to Europe (Lach, 1965). Thereafter, books on China began to be published, beginning with a book by a Portuguese Dominican, Gaspar de Cruz (Lach, 1965: 742). Matteo Ricci, the Jesuit priest and missionary, arrived in China in 1582. He finally arrived at the Imperial Palace in 1601, and won the respect of the Ming court with his scientific knowledge and ability to predict the solar eclipse. Ricci reported that the large population of China was the foundation of its strength (Lach, 1965: 802). Regardless of Western admiration or disdain, the fact of China's superior population numbers remains fundamental to all appraisals of China. In early modern Europe, China was commonly seen as a superior civilisation – one from which Europeans could learn. During the Enlightenment, Voltaire and Leibniz expressed admiration at the virtues of the Chinese and at the efficiency of its autocratic system of government (Ching and Oxtoby, 1992). The fact that the Chinese far outnumbered the combined Western population and had a cohesive administration meant that it had the potential to challenge Western civilisation. A prominent question for Western statesmen and the Vatican was whether China could be subdued – either by force or through Christian conversion (Lach, 1965).

*The Yellow Peril: China as a threat*

Underlying the yellow peril discourse is essentially a fear of the Chinese overwhelming Western civilisation (Chen, 1979). This fear was “evoked by the historical experiences of Europeans”: barbarians had overwhelmed Rome and Mongol hordes had overrun medieval Europe (Chen, 1979: 58). The term ‘yellow peril’ was coined by the German emperor Kaiser Wilhelm II in 1895 (Kane, 2009). The term became part of popular discourse in the West after it was used in a popular religious book published in the US in 1911 titled: *The Yellow Peril; or, Orient vs. Occident as Viewed by Modern Statesmen and Ancient Prophets* (Rupert, 1911). In the US, Canada, Australia and South Africa, the construction of the Chinese as the yellow peril arose from the fear that Chinese immigration would overwhelm the white populations of those countries.

Huntington’s work *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, first published as an article in 1993, and subsequently as a book in 1996, was particularly influential in constructing China as a potentially threatening civilisation (Huntington, 1993b; Huntington, 1996). Huntington returns not only to the familiar construction of China as a communist threat, but to the construct of China as an empire. Interestingly, Huntington includes countries and peoples that are not Chinese in his Sinic Zone. Making use of what he terms the “Greater China and its Co-Prosperity Sphere”, Huntington includes the nations of (North and South) Korea, Vietnam, the Liu Chiu Islands between Japan and Taiwan, and Japan, as well as non-Han peoples in China – the Manchu, Mongols, Uyghur, Turks, and Tibetans (Huntington, 2002: 168). This construction of the ‘Sinic’ returns to a traditional Western understanding of China as an empire not very different from the Mongol Empire that once threatened Europe. According to Huntington, East Asians attribute their economic success to their culture; he writes, “For East Asians, East Asian success is particularly the result of the ast Asian cultural stress on the collectivity rather than the individual”, while there are differences among Asian societies the emphasis on “thrift, family, work, and discipline” are common (Huntington, 2002: 108). In Huntington’s construction, Sinic culture is unitary, frozen in time, and quickly regaining the potential to (once again) overwhelm the West.

An age-old Western fear of an emergent China has been rekindled in the early 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Lord Mandelson, in his 2009 House of Lords testimony as the First Secretary of State, observed that:

China's growing economic weight, and therefore its increasing political influence in the world, means that we have to come to terms with China as it is, in many respects, and not perhaps, as some would say, as we like it to be... I found during my time as the EU's Trade Commissioner, that I was coming up against many people, in different countries, not just in Europe, who regarded China as a terrible threat (Great Britain. Parliament. House of Lords. European Union Committee, 2009).<sup>7</sup>

The first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century was a time when Chinese influence truly begun to be felt. With hindsight, Mandelson has come to the realisation that China's economic weight means that the West can no longer dictate the terms of its relationship with China. His cabinet colleague, Jack Straw, was one of those who regarded China as a terrible threat in Africa. During his visit to Nigeria while he was British Foreign Secretary, Straw commented that what China was doing in Africa was "much the same as Britain had done 150 years before" (Jian, 2007a).

The great power discourse has emerged alongside the PRC's increasing confidence in asserting its status as a peaceful rising/developing power (Suettinger, 2004). As China continues to rise, it is becoming more confident in its place in the international order. Nevertheless, Beijing has been careful not to construct its identity as that of a great power. This reluctance to identify as a great power became evident when, in 2004, the CCP's elite leadership retracted its initial endorsement of the concept of 'peaceful rise' [*heping jueqi*] and adopted the less threatening phrase 'peaceful development' [*heping fazhan*] (Suettinger, 2004). The identity of China as a great power, and more specifically as a great power in Africa, should rather be seen as a Western construction.

In popular discourse in the West, China is a great empire with a glorious past. China occupied a place on the peripheries of world politics in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries, a period

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<sup>7</sup> Lord Mandelson was EU Trade Commissioner between 22 November, 2004 and 3 October, 2008.

in which Britain, the US and the USSR dominated world politics. But the economic reforms initiated by Deng have resulted in a great economic revival (Fairbank, 1992), and today China is the second largest economy in the world.

*Tracing the China Threat in Africa variation in the China as great power discourse*

The discourse of a Chinese threat in Africa is long-standing. In South Africa, the importation of Chinese labourers to revive the gold mines on the Witwatersrand after the South African (Anglo-Boer) War sparked fierce and vocal resistance. Attitudes by white minors toward the Chinese on the Witwatersrand at the beginning of the twentieth century were well illustrated by this newspaper editorial:

“We draw the attention of our readers to a letter written a day or two ago by a Rand Chinaman to a Rand daily, and who asks, in the name of his aggrieved countrymen, for 1) burgher rights; 2) full trading rights; 3) the right to hold fixed property. That shows what the aspiration of Chinamen will be if they come to this country” (*The Friend*, January 12, 1904, cited in Yap and Leong Man, 1996: 100).

Already concerned about their jobs on the mines and the depressed wages during the South African War, the white working class in South Africa feared that the importation of Chinese labourers would further depress their wages and that Chinese shopkeepers would compete with white owned shops for business (Yap and Leong Man, 1996). However, mining magnates at the Rand, eager to source cheap labour, were enthusiastic about importing Chinese labourers. In order to allay white fear, Sir George Farrar, chairman of the Anglo-French group, gave assurance that skilled jobs would be reserved, and that white farmers and traders would be protected (Yap and Leong Man, 1996). Farrar’s assurances fell on deaf ears and a strong anti-Chinese lobby rose from white trade unions (Yap and Leong Man, 1996). The Transvaal was granted responsible government on January 1, 1907 and its parliament passed the Asiatic Law Amendment Bill at its first sitting (Yap and Leong Man, 1996: 139). The enthusiasm for this Bill, the first in a long list of racist South African laws, reflected a deep-seated fear of whites being overwhelmed by ‘Asiatics’. Supporters of the bill described the requirement to register all Asiatics as “the first step to stop what may

mean the extinction of the white races in this country by immigration from the East” (*Indian Opinion*, March 30, 1902, cited in Yap and Leong Man, 1996: 140).

Noting Western unease about an alternative model of government, such as the one offered by Maoist China to African states or revolutionary movements, Philip Snow commented that:

Insofar as they [Westerners] have noticed it [Chinese engagements in Africa] their response has been one of unease. Any Asian interest in Africa, any African sympathy with Asia has been seen as constituting an implicit threat to the West’s supremacy (Snow, 1988: xiv).

The unease felt by the West at the prospect of a Chinese challenge to Western supremacy is exemplified in a 2007 editorial in the journal *Foreign Policy*. Written by the journal’s chief editor, the article carries the alarmist title: “Rogue aid; what’s wrong with the foreign aid programs of China, Venezuela, and Saudi Arabia? They are enormously generous. And they are toxic” (Naim, 2001a). The same article appeared as an op-ed piece in the *New York Times* the next day, this time titled “Help not Wanted” (Naim, 2007b):

My friend was visibly shaken. He had just learned that he had lost one of his clients to Chinese competitors. ‘It’s amazing,’ he told me. ‘The Chinese have completely priced us out of the market. We can’t compete with what they are able to offer.’ Of course, manufacturing jobs are lost to China every day. But my friend is not in manufacturing. He works at the World Bank... In recent years, wealthy nondemocratic regimes have begun to undermine development policy through their own activist aid programs. Call it rogue aid. It is development assistance that is nondemocratic in origin and nontransparent in practice, and its effect is typically to stifle real progress while hurting ordinary citizens” (Naim, 2007b).

The perception of aid from China (and other non-Western, non-democratic countries) as unhelpful, and indeed threatening, is underscored by Naim’s description of such aid as “rogue”. It is roguish because it is “nondemocratic” and “nontransparent” – in other words,

non-Western. 'Responsible aid programs' designed by the West for Africa are portrayed as desperately needed to remedy the ills of Africa, but are not able to be received because of "irresponsible aid programs" originating from nondemocratic countries from the East.

Naim's attitude towards the relationship between aid-receiving countries in Africa and non-Western donors is the typical one of unease, as described by Snow and Hutchinson. Aid that does not follow the Western model is perceived as a threat to the West's supremacy in Africa. An alternative model, offered by the Chinese or anyone else, is described as 'rogue aid', undermining 'proper' work done by the West and leading only to corruption and chaos (Naim, 2007a).

The discourse of Chinese Threat in Africa remains prevalent in Western media. In *The Mail Online*, the online version of tabloid *The Daily Mail* in the UK, an article titled "How China's taking over Africa, and why the West should be VERY worried" appeared in 2008 (*Mail Online*, July 18, 2008). The article well illustrates the fear that China intends to take over Africa; Chinese engagements in Africa are described as:

Reminiscent of the West's imperial push in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries – but on a much more dramatic, determined scale – China's rulers believe Africa can become a 'satellite' state, solving its own problems of over-population and shortage of natural resources at a stroke... the strategy has been carefully devised by officials in Beijing, where one expert has estimated that China will eventually need to send 300 million people to Africa to solve the problems of over-population and pollution" (*Mail Online*, July 18, 2008).

The fear of a 'yellow peril' that will overrun the West is expressed in greater or lesser degrees and held by both laymen and professional diplomats. Secretary Straw implied that Britain had learnt its lessons and had superior knowledge due to its colonial past, and that China was retracing Britain's own mistaken footsteps in a new scramble for Africa. Straw's comments should be seen in the context of the Blair government's making Africa a foreign policy priority. In July 2005, the G8 Summit was held at Gleneagles in Scotland. Tony Blair was the chair of the summit, at which aid to Africa and debt cancellation became a priority, in line with the Labour government's policy. In his effort to 'help' Africa, Blair declared



Africa a 'scar on the conscience of the world' (Abrahamsen, 2005; Blair, 2001; Taylor, 2010). Straw's remarks about China 'colonising' Africa were made nine months before the China-Africa Summit in Beijing (Jian, 2007a). The 2006 China-Africa Summit was of the utmost importance for China's ruling elite, functioning as a 'warm-up party' for the official coming of age party for China – the 2008 Olympic Games. Predictably, Beijing was furious at Straw's comments; it broke off all contact with Britain on issues concerning Africa for fifteen months (*The Times*, November 9, 2009).

The 'China is colonising Africa' discourse was so pervasive, however, that the BBC enlisted Thabo Mbeki as its supporter in an article titled "Mbeki Warns on China-Africa ties: Africa must guard against falling into a colonial relationship with China" (*BBC News*, December 14, 2006). However, Mbeki's thoughts on the Sino-African relationship, expressed upon his return to South Africa after the November 2006 Beijing Summit, were more than the BBC headline implied. Upon his return from the China-Africa summit, Mbeki wrote on his blog on the ANC website that:

...to use a phrase well known to economists, other things being equal, this means that for no fault of the Chinese, the economic relationship between Africa and China would replicate the historic colonial economic relationship in terms of which Africa served as a source of raw materials and a market for goods manufactured in the countries of the colonizers (Mbeki, 2006).

The BBC article omitted Mbeki's emphasis on the structural economic relationships Africa has with the outside world, so as to enlist Mbeki as a supporter of the 'China is colonising Africa' discourse. Mbeki's 'criticism' of Chinese colonialism was later picked up by the *Financial Times* in a 2009 article titled "Pretoria defends China's Africa Policy", the reporter comments on the "contrast" between the statement of South African Trade Minister Rob Davis that China's growing presence in Africa "can be only a good thing" and Mbeki's warning that "Africa risked falling into a "colonial relationship" with China" (Anderlini, 2010). But, clearly, Mbeki did not think that China intended to colonise Africa. Rather, the South African government welcomed another investment partner.

## THE FORMATION OF THE DISCOURSE OF CHINA AS A THIRD WORLD COUNTRY

That China belongs in the Third World bloc has been the most consistent articulation of Chinese identity since the founding of the PRC (Van Ness, 1998: 151). The basic discourse whereby China identifies itself as a part of, and as a leader of, the Third World has remained consistent despite changes in vocabulary – China has identified itself variously as part of the ‘Third World’, as a ‘developing country’, and as part of the ‘Global South’.

By tracing and analysing the basic discourse of China as a leader of the Third World, we are able to examine the intertextuality of China’s Africa policy – considering how texts refer to earlier texts for legitimacy, right from the beginnings of the PRC’s foreign policy. This analysis contrasts with that of commentators who view China’s foreign policy as having two distinct phases: the ideologically-driven phase of the 1960s and 1970s, and the more pragmatic phase that has followed the era of Reform and Opening-up initiated by Deng in 1978 (Heginbotham, 2007: 189). While polemics against Soviet revisionism and US imperialism are a thing of the past, the identity articulated by Beijing in its official Africa discourse remains one where both China and Africa are Third World countries struggling against different forms of inequality, injustice and domination entrenched by the West.

The Chinese construction of its identity as a Third World country is largely in response to what it perceives as Western hegemonism and neo-imperialism. This construction began when Beijing met African leaders at the Bandung Conference and sought a leadership position in the Third World bloc.

### *Imperial China and the Founding of the People’s Republic*

Imperial China identified itself as the ‘middle kingdom’ [*zhong guo*] at the centre of the world and its emperor was the ‘son of heaven’ [*tian zi*]. China was at the centre of the Sinocentric system, in which issues of respect, “face” and propriety were the norm (Zhou, 2007). Prior to being forced to open to the world by a series of Western colonial invasions, beginning with the First Opium War in 1839, Beijing saw itself as a standard bearer in terms of power, morality and indeed civilisation (Fairbank, 1992). As an illustration of imperial China’s confidence and self-regard, consider Emperor Qianlong’s response to the McCartney Mission of 1774, a mission sent by George III of Britain to China to request trade links and diplomatic ties. Emperor Qianlong dismissed the mission, stating that “[w]e

possess all things. I set no value on objects strange or ingenious, and have no use for your country's manufacturers" (Cheng and Lestz, 1999: 109). Imperial China's supreme confidence proved to be unrealistic and unsustainable in the face of Western technological superiority. From the time of the First Opium War, in 1839, to the end of World War II, China was brought to its knees by a series of lost wars. This period became known by the Chinese as the Century of Humiliation [*bainian guochi*] (Scott, 2007). Proud of its ancient glories and aware of its recent failures in the modern era, the new leaders of China in 1949 regarded the West with an ambiguous attitude of both "admiration and indignation" (Dittmer, 1991: 209). The narrative that the Chinese were humiliated and suffered great injustice in the face of the Western (and Japanese) imperial and colonial onslaught was and still remains the fundamental theme in China's struggle to find its place in the world (Deng, 2008; Kim, 1998; Scott, 2007). While there is a strong discourse of Chinese victimhood, identification with fellow post-colonial countries was not automatic and immediate.

Mao proclaimed in 1949 at the founding of the People's Republic of China that "the Chinese People have stood up" [*zhongguo renmin zhanqilai le*]. A new China was to stand up to the Century of Humiliation, colonial oppression and invasions. After being forced to come to terms with a Western-dominated international system and a series of civil wars, the new leadership of China was to begin the wrenching process of finding its place in the world. Initially, the CCP affiliated itself with two international reference groups: the communist bloc and the Third World (Dittmer, 1991: 210). The USSR led the Soviet communist bloc, and identification with the Third World represented an opportunity for China "to exercise international leadership – an opportunity not at hand within the communist bloc" (Dittmer, 1991: 210).

Proud of its recent victory against the much better equipped Kuomintang (KMT) through a 'people's war', the CCP was enthusiastic about its model of peasant revolution. Liu Shiqi, the Chairman of the PRC, saw the Chinese experience as relevant to newly established regimes everywhere, stating that:

The path taken by the Chinese people in defeating imperialism and its lackeys and in founding the People's Republic is the path that should be taken by the people of

various colonial and semi-colonial countries in their fight for national independence and people's democracy”(Xinhua, November 23, 1949)

Liu's statement was one of the earliest statements by a CCP leader suggesting newly independent countries should follow the Chinese model. The CCP leaders' enthusiasm and pride in the Chinese model needs to be seen in its historical context. Throughout the Century of Humiliation, Chinese reformers and leaders had tried and failed to find a way for China to stand up in the face of imperial and colonial aggression. The series of attempts and failures – Zeng Guofan's Self-Strengthening Movement [*zhiqiang yundong*] during the late Qing Dynasty and Sun Yat-sen's overthrow of the Qing and founding of the Republic of China – were well known to all educated Chinese. The euphoria that China had finally found a model whereby it could throw off the 'Sick man of Asia' tag and stand tall in the family of nations was palpable. The sentiment that the Chinese model was unique and should be followed by other colonised peoples struggling for liberation was, however, dropped until the 1960s, in deference to Soviet orthodoxy (Dittmer, 1991; Van Ness, 1993;).

In other words, the initial official discourse of 'new China' was that of the 'socialist camp'. New China's place and identity as a part of the Soviet bloc was affirmed by Mao in his essay "On People's Democratic Dictatorship". In this essay, Mao argues that China should not sit on the fence, but rather should choose either the side of socialist countries or the side of capitalists. He writes:

Up to now the principal and fundamental experience the Chinese people have gained is twofold... Externally, unite in a common struggle with those nations of the world which treat us as equals and unite with the peoples of all countries. That is, ally ourselves with the Soviet Union, with the People's Democracies and with the proletariat and the broad masses of the people in all other countries, and form an international united front (Mao, 1949).

In the first decade of CCP rule in China, the policy of 'leaning to one side' [*yibian dao*] meant an alignment with the Soviet Union against the capitalist West. Through the theoretical lens of Marxist class struggle, Western capitalist countries exploited China and other

colonies in Asia, South America and Africa. It was important that China as a part of the communist bloc struggled against international capitalist forces – just like it had struggled against the KMT. It was inevitable, in any case, that other colonised countries would follow the march of the proletariat revolution and overthrow the yoke of colonialism.

Beijing was proactive in asserting a discourse of equality and non-interference as soon as it was able to. After the ceasefire in the Korean War in July 1953, Premier Zhou Enlai visited India and Burma. During this visit, the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence, which were to form the foundation of the PRC's foreign policy discourse, were announced at the Joint Declaration of Chinese and Indian Premiers on June 28, 1954 (see appendix).

Given the context of the Century of Humiliation, sovereignty, territorial integrity and mutual non-interference formed the bedrock of the CCP's foreign policy discourse. However, while there were repeated references to peace in the CCP's foreign policy discourse, it was not until the 1980s that the PRC entered into a period of relative peace with its neighbours.

### *Bandung Conference*

The Bandung Conference was a meeting of previously colonised and newly independent countries from Asia and Africa to discuss and assert their identities in the post-World War II and post-colonial era (Warnapala, 2005). The intention of holding an Asia-Africa Conference, as expressed by Prime Minister Bandaranaike of Ceylon, was to initiate “something much greater – a federation of free and equal Asiatic countries, working not merely for our own advantage but for the progress and peace of all mankind” (cited in Warnapala, 2005). The Bandung Conference was intended to be a major international event symbolising the awakening of Asia and Africa. The conference was to announce an end to being a passive bystander and the intention of newly-independent countries to actively engage with international politics (Warnapala, 2005). The Bandung Conference would later lead to the creation of the Non-Aligned Movement, which was made up of Third World countries that refused to belong to either the Soviet bloc or US bloc during the Cold War (Mitchel and McGiffert, 2007: 14; Warnapala, 2005).

When Stalin died in 1954, Mao became the communist world's elder statesman and this emboldened the CCP to take some independent foreign policy decisions (Hutchison,

1975: 13). Prior to the Asian-African Conference, there was very little contact between Africa and the CCP (Larkin, 1971: 15). Six of the twenty-nine states represented at Bandung were African: Egypt, Ethiopia, Gold Coast (Ghana), Liberia, Libya, and Sudan. It was at Bandung that China began diplomatic contacts with African governments and African liberations movements (Larkin, 1971: 17). The inclusion of the Five Principles announced in the previous year in The Declaration on Promoting World Peace and Cooperation was celebrated by Beijing as a diplomatic victory (*People's Daily*, April 18, 2005). For Beijing, still frustrated by non-recognition by the UN, Bandung offered an alternative place of international legitimacy (Byron, 1966). It was not apparent that Africa was important to China at Bandung, nor was there evidence that China foresaw Africa to be particularly important at this stage (Hutchinson, 1975: 14; Larkin, 1971: 19). However, Premier Zhou impressed the delegates at Bandung with his statesmanship and pragmatism by offering to enter into negotiations with the US on the Taiwan question. According to Hutchinson, "[i]t seems that he [Zhou Enlai] altered his prepared text in order to harmonise with the 'Bandung spirit' – an early example of Chinese pragmatism in foreign affairs" (Hutchinson, 1975: 14). After the conference, "China's interest in Africa quickened" (Hutchinson, 1975: 15). Beijing immediately received a small Egyptian trade delegation and agreed in July to buy 13 000 tonnes of Egyptian cotton. Sino-Egyptian trade would prove resilient and consistent in the future, even when Sino-Egyptian political relations strained.

The need to exercise an independent foreign policy and not be dictated to meant that Beijing was not satisfied by playing the role of junior partner of the USSR in the 'Communist International'. This was especially true after Stalin's passing (Sun, 1994). Assessing the Sino-Soviet split, a Chinese Party historian wrote in 1994 that,

[T]he Soviet leadership began to evolve to become a hegemonic power, perusing an agenda of ruling the world with the United States. The USSR interfered with other countries' and parties' domestic affairs, insisting and forcing socialist bloc countries to follow its leadership. The Soviets applied pressure on those that insisted on independence and self-determination, eventually leading to a split in the socialist bloc (Sun, 1994: 55) (Author's translation).

Chinese identification with the Communist bloc was not sustainable in the post-Stalin era. The Sino-Soviet split meant a split in the communist bloc between a pro-Soviet camp and the much smaller Maoist camp (Dittmer, 1991: 226-229). The Sino-Soviet split had the effect of further isolating Beijing in the international arena and placing it in the unenviable position of being at odds with both the US and the USSR during the Cold War. However, under Mao's leadership, the CCP had arguably overcome greater adversity during its struggle against the KMT and the Japanese. It was based on this experience of guerrilla warfare that Mao and the CCP leadership formed their international strategy, and it was when Beijing viewed Asian, African and Latin American countries as the collective 'countryside' of the international system that the PRC found an identity in the international system. In his 1965 essay *"Long Live the Victory of People's War"*, Lin Biao, the Vice-premier of the PRC, outlined the CCP's international strategy:

Comrade Mao Tse-Tung's theory of the establishment of rural revolutionary base areas and the encirclement of the cities from the countryside is of outstanding and universal importance for the present revolutionary struggles of all the oppressed nations and peoples, and particularly for the struggles of the oppressed nations and peoples in Asia, Africa and Latin America against imperialism and its lackeys... Taking the entire globe, if North America and Western Europe can be called the 'cities of the world', then Asia, Africa and Latin America constitute the 'rural areas of the world' (Lin, 1965).

In Chinese discourse, the West was constructed as the urban bourgeoisie and the Asian, African and Latin American countries as the rural peasantry. The analogy of the urban/rural divide paid homage to the well-known successes of the guerrilla tactics used by the CCP against the KMT during the Chinese Civil War. By grouping African, Asian and Latin American countries together as the world's countryside, and referring to the Chinese strategy of surrounding the cities from the countryside, Beijing was effectively identifying itself as the leader of an international class struggle – a class struggle in which China had already won a domestic victory. In terms of Lin Biao's classifying the Third World as the

world's countryside, China recognized the vital importance of securing African recognition and support for its legitimacy (Yu, 1970: 69-70).

### *Zhou Enlai's Tour of Africa*

In the early 1960s, Beijing faced a serious existential threat and took a very confrontational international posture. It lost the support of a long term ally in Soviet Russia, fought a border war with India in 1962, criticised the Limited Test Ban Treaty of 1963, and detonated its own nuclear bomb in 1964 (Fairbank, 2006; Ryan, 2003).

While China had initially identified with the Soviet bloc in the 1950s, its sense of belonging had become insecure by 1956, when Khrushchev turned his attention to trying to consolidate the USSR's position not only as a continental power but as a world power. To this end, Khrushchev began to foster better relations with developed nations, and to solicit client states among newly-independent developing countries (Dittmer, 1991: 210-212). Khrushchev's doctrinal innovations and condemnation of Stalinism were met with Mao's criticism of "revisionism" and the statement that China will "continue with the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat" (Dittmer, 1991: 215). In 1960, Khrushchev cut off Chinese economic aid and withdrew all Soviet experts from China and the Sino-Soviet Split was official (Brautigam, 2009: 202). Beijing had now officially broken ties with the Soviet bloc led by Soviet Russia and had to recalibrate its foreign policy and engage in a re-articulation of its identity.

It is in breaking out of an international siege that Zhou Enlai, the Premier and Foreign Minister of China, embarked on a ten country tour of Africa to rally support. In his words, the purpose of his visit was to:

Enhance the mutual understanding between China and the friendly African countries, strengthen the traditional friendship between the Chinese people and the African people, further develop the relations of friendship and cooperation between China and the African countries, increase our knowledge and learn useful things from the African people(*New China News Agency*, January 17, 1964).



During this trip, Zhou emphasised the similarities between China and Africa and downplayed the differences (Hutchison, 1975: 62). While Zhou was eager to be pragmatic and adaptive with his new African friends, there was no doubt as to who was the common enemy. In Mogadishu on February 3, Zhou said at a press conference that the US government:

“[p]ursues a colonial policy of interference and adopts an arrogant attitude in an attempt to control other countries... [but]not only the peoples cannot be held down, but even those in power in various countries sometimes find it unbearable... Consequently the whole thing will burst, and this is the sorrow of US imperialism(*Peking Review*, January 21, 1964).

In an editorial of the *People's Daily*, the enemy was the imperialists:

[I]n the communiqués issued after their talks, Premier Chou En-lai [Zhou Enlai] and the leaders of the African Countries agreed: in order to prevent world war, it is necessary to wage an unrelenting struggle against the imperialist policies of aggression and war; the contemporary national liberation movement is an important force in defence of world peace; imperialism and old and new colonialism must be completely liquidated in Africa (*People's Daily*, February 6, 1964).

Emphasising the differences between China and the colonial powers in providing aid, Beijing had stipulated in an agreement with Guinea in 1960 that Chinese advisors would live in Guinea at a standard “not exceeding that of personnel of the same rank in the Republic of Guinea” (Brautigam, 2009). This reference to the sense of superiority felt by Western and Soviet experts articulated a discourse of sameness between Chinese and Africans. A discourse of camaraderie and equality was maintained when Zhou announced the Eight Principles of Foreign Aid (see Appendix five).

Commenting on these eight principles, King notes that they “were not laid out by a donor nation for the enlightenment of its selected recipients. Quite the opposite” (King, 2006). Beijing was indeed under pressure from everywhere – from the two superpowers

as well as its neighbours – and was desperate to win friends and allies in Africa. The Eight Principles of Foreign Aid clearly articulated the Chinese as different to traditional donors of the United States, Soviet Union as well as ex-colonising countries of Europe. Zhou emphasised China's common experience with Africa, given their shared history of colonialism, and made the point that China saw itself as equal with African countries. Aid promised by Beijing to Africa was not "alms giving", but rather mutual assistance between comrades (*China Daily*, April 21, 2011).

China's international predicament was not lost on African leaders, however. President Bourguiba of Tunisia raised his concerns with Zhou regarding China's attitude towards the UN; the use of force in settling boarder disputes; and the Partial Test Ban Treaty.<sup>8</sup> He recalled his conversation with Zhou:

I said 'you come to Africa as the enemy of the capitalist states, of the West, of the neutralists and the non-aligned, of India, of Tito, of Khrushchev, of everybody. You have not chosen an easy policy. I'll say that. Don't expect to score much in Africa. Others won't tell you straight; I will – you won't get far in this continent' (Adie: 1964; *Jewish Observer and Middle East Review*, April 3, 1964)

Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia raised similar concerns to those expressed by Bourguiba about the hard-line approach Beijing was taking on international relations, and he made similar criticisms of China's positions on the China-India border dispute; the Partial Test Ban Treaty; and the United Nations (Adie, 1964). Zhou's African tour aroused a great deal of international interest, suspicion and alarm, not least of all in India, which had just lost a border dispute with China in 1962 (Sen, 1964). An Indian paper called for "common action by India, Soviet Russia and the West in the task of checkmating Peking's sinister design in Africa. We cannot any more afford to be complacent" (*The Indian Express*, December 6, 1963; Sen, 1964). Strategic diplomacy remained the chief motivation behind

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<sup>8</sup> The Partial Test Ban Treaty (PTBT) was signed in Moscow on August 5, 1963. It banned nuclear testing in the atmosphere, in outer space, and under water. While not banning tests underground it does prohibit radioactive particles from spreading beyond the territorial control of states. China was not a signatory to the PTBT.

China's aid projects in Africa. The key objectives were to win diplomatic recognition away from the Republic of China in Taiwan and to gain support for its stance against the Soviet Union and the US (Brautigam, 2009: 34).

### *Articulation of China as a part of the Third World*

In analysis of China's approach to African security, China's identification with the Third World has been the most consistent theme in Beijing's foreign policy (Van Ness, 1993). However, this identification cannot be taken at face value. As China has expressed its desire to champion Third World causes, it has also sought to win Third World endorsement for China in its search for power and economic wealth in the global order (Van Ness, 1998). China supported revolutionary movements in the 1960s and 70s to overthrow newly-independent African governments, but today it professes to be a staunch and consistent defender of the principle of sovereignty and non-interference in domestic affairs of the same African countries

It was in encircling the 'cities' of the developed countries from the 'countryside' of Asia, Africa and Latin America that Mao articulated the commonality between China and Africa. Lin's articulation of in 1964 was refined and rearticulated by Mao into the 'Three Worlds Theory'. In a meeting between Mao and Kenneth Kaunda in Beijing in 1974, Mao said:

I hold that the US and the Soviet Union belong to the First World. The middle elements, such as Japan, Europe, Australia and Canada, belong to the Second World. We are the Third World (Mao, 1998: 454).

Differing markedly from Western countries in their understanding of the international order, Mao considered the First World to consist of the two superpowers – the US and USSR. The Second World consisted of the allies of the superpowers – Canada, the UK, and the Soviet Bloc countries. And the Third World consisted of nations of the Non-Aligned Movement, which included African countries. Mao's 'Three Worlds Theory' and the leadership role envisaged for China in this international class struggle formed the framework through which China viewed its role in African affairs. Beijing criticised the

USSR for engaging in exploitative aid and trade relations and trying to politically control the countries it assisted (O'Leary, 1980:106-107). Africa was to become the forum for the Chinese struggle against the two superpowers and for its bid for international legitimacy (Shinn, 2008: 157).

### *The United Nations*

It is easy to make a negative judgment of Beijing's gamesmanship in international relations in the 1960s. However, one needs to give Beijing credit for winning the support of enough newly independent African countries in the General Assembly to gain entry into the United Nations (Fairbank, 2006). In terms of supporting African revolutionary movements to overthrow colonial governments, Beijing's commitment was calculated to distract Soviet forces. Beijing's support for the Zimbabwe National Union Patriotic Front (Zanu-PF), the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) in South Africa, and the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) was primarily the result of these movements being in competition with Soviet-backed movements in these countries (Shinn, 2008: 157). Beijing's abandonment of the MPLA, an openly communist group, in favour of Holden Roberto's FNLA shows that Beijing's support for the FNLA was driven less by ideological consistency than by the strategy to "preoccupy Soviet forces in far off conflicts" (Eisenman, 2007: 32).

In 1974, Deng reaffirmed China's identity in the world at the UN:

China is a country, and a developing country as well. China belongs to the Third World... China is not a superpower, nor will she ever seek to be one... If capitalism is restored in a big socialist country, it will inevitably become a superpower... If one day China should change her colour and turn into a superpower, if she too should play the tyrant in the world, and everywhere subject others to her bullying, aggression and exploitation, the people of the world should identify her as social-imperialism, expose it, oppose it and work together with the Chinese people to overthrow it (Deng's Speech at the UN General Assembly, April 10, 1974; *Peking Review* April 19, 1974).

After Mao's passing in 1976 and the fall of the Gang of Four, Deng and party pragmatists took control of the CCP. After Mao's death the factors that underlay China's Africa policy changed. Deng had a different assessment of the international situation and also had made a strategic shift away from world revolution to focus on domestic economic growth (Li, 2006: 12). The impact of Deng's reassessment of Beijing's priorities had an immediate impact on China's African aid. During the initial periods of reform, new aid commitments announced for Africa fell from US\$254 million in 1980 to US\$25 million in 1981. However, this quickly recovered to US\$ 289 in 1984 (Brautigam, 2008: 203). Also, China did not send medical aid groups to Africa in 1979 and 1980 (Li, 2006: 15).

During the first decade of reforms in the 1980s, the Chinese focus on Africa waned. Domestically, Beijing occupied itself with trying to establish a more market-orientated and open economy. Internationally, Beijing focused its attention on building and expanding relations with developed countries. The deterioration of relations between China and both Vietnam and Albania, (both former major Chinese aid recipients) also prompted Beijing to reassess its aid policy (Li, 2006). Announcing that no new aid projects on the scale of the Tanzam Railway would be undertaken, Beijing announced that "promoting joint prosperity" was its foreign policy goal (Li, 2006: 15).

#### *The Tiananmen Square incident and renewed focus on Africa*

As China entered the 1990s, two major factors revived the importance of Africa for China. First, violent suppression of Tiananmen Square protestors led to condemnation and sanctions from the West (Alden, 2008; Sutter, 2009; Taylor, 1998). This ended the initial honeymoon period between China and the West and prompted a strategic rethink on the part of Beijing about over-reliance on the West. Following Zhou Enlai's example, Chinese foreign minister Qian Qichen set off on an Africa tour in July 1989, and subsequently began the tradition of a January tour of Africa by Chinese foreign ministers (Brautigam, 2009: 68). The rediscovery of, and emphasis placed on, African friendship was shown by the increasing number of visits by high-profile Chinese leaders to Africa (Taylor, 1998).

#### *Forum on China-Africa Cooperation*

In 2000, the First Ministerial Conference on the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) was held in Beijing. Ministers from 44 African countries attended. The Beijing Declaration of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation states:

[W]e reaffirm that the injustice and inequality in the current international system are incompatible with the trend of the times towards world peace and development, hinder the development of the countries of the South and pose threats to international peace and security” (FOCAC, 2000).

In this declaration, reference to the ‘Third World’ is replaced by the term “countries of the South”. However, there is continued reference to the injustice and inequality suffered by the countries of the South and consequent hindrance to their development.

Chinese engagement with Africa in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is more focused on economic partnership than on international class struggle. This can be seen by the constant emphasis on an economic win-win by Chinese leaders touring Africa (*China Daily*, August 11, 2009).

Compared with Zhou Enlai’s first Africa trip, half a century before, the Beijing Summit in 2006 was a triumphant *tour de force*: the largest gathering of African heads of states in history. The Beijing Summit of 2006 was a tribute to China’s economic success as a result of the Open and Reform process. With China’s economic revival, economic ties between China and the African continent had developed at a rapid pace. In the five years between the first conference in 2000, and the third in 2006, bilateral trade had increased five-fold, from US\$1 billion to US\$50 billion (Watts, 2006). However, despite China’s triumphant economic rise and an increasing emphasis on economic win-win, the themes of Third World solidarity and shared historical experiences of liberation remained consistent. In China’s Africa policy, published at the beginning of 2006, Beijing states:

China, the largest developing country in the world, follows the path of peaceful development and pursues an independent foreign policy of peace... The African continent, which encompasses the largest number of developing countries, is an important force for world peace and development...

“China-Africa friendship is embedded in the long history of interchange. Sharing similar historical experiences, China and Africa have all along sympathized with and supported each other in the struggle for national liberation and forged a profound friendship” (*China’s Africa Policy*, 2006).

At the close of the Beijing Summit, the theme of Third World solidarity was directly reiterated:

We hold that the adherence of China, the world's largest developing country, to peaceful development and the commitment of Africa, a continent with the largest number of developing countries, to stability, development and renaissance are in themselves significant contribution to world peace and development(Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, 2006)

The 2006 FOCAC Beijing Summit was a significant milestone. It was a dress rehearsal for the 2008 Beijing Olympics and contributed significantly to the discourse of China as a leader of developing countries.

### **CONTESTING DISCOURSES: GREAT POWER VERSUS THIRD WORLD COUNTRY**

While West-based scholars are frustrated by China’s “tendency to try to be all things to all states on all global issues” (Kim, 1998: 4), it is interesting to note that the identification with the two basic discourses - great power and Third World country - is precisely what at least one Chinese foreign policy academic thinks is the strength of Chinese foreign policy. In his article on “change” [*bian*] and “unchange” [*bubian*] (*sic*) of the PRC’s diplomatic strategy, Zhang of the China Foreign Affairs University points out the tension between Chinese relations with developed and developing countries. He wrote:

In reality, China is a great power (*da guo*), it has a major influence on international affairs (*guoji shiwu*). As such, it is unavoidable that that it needs to conduct good relations with Western great powers as well as with developing countries. At the same time, China is a developing country; we have a wide range of mutual interest

and traditional friendship with a great number of developing countries. This means that China's political foundation (*zhengzhi genji*) is with developing countries, necessitating good relations with developing countries. These two aspects of our diplomatic strategy (*waijiao zhanlue*) are complementary. It is important that we do not lose sight of the one for the other, emphasize the one side and neglect the other"(Zhang, 2006: 47) (Author's translation).

Beijing's active cultivation of both sets of identities, as a great power and as a Third World country is not accidental, it is shrewd diplomacy conducted to maximize Chinese advantage. Explaining the importance of Africa in terms of Chinese foreign policy, Zhang wrote in a later article that:

Our relations with developing countries in Africa are still the most reliable foundation for Chinese foreign relations (*waijiao guanxi*)... Undeniably, China needs Africa, the eleven times China defeated calls for sanctions by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights; the thirteen times China defeated the motion for Taiwan's return to the UN; the winning of the 2008 Olympic Games and 2010 World Expo – all of it depended upon African support(Zhang, 2007: 26) (Author's translation).

What is seen as a contradiction by Western observers when China demands equal treatment by Western powers and offered equality to small African countries is intentional and seen by Beijing as a strength of its foreign policy.

In August 2012, on a trip to Africa, US Secretary of State Hilary Clinton contrasted the US commitment to democracy and human rights in Africa to "rival powers' focus on exploiting resources" in a veiled reference to China (Smith, 2012). In this report, the African correspondent of *The Guardian* wrote that it was widely understood that Clinton was contrasting the Western perspective with that of the mercantilist and non-democratic China. That the very top diplomats from the West in Hilary Clinton (and Jack Straw) are actively constructing the identity of a democratic West (in Africa) versus undemocratic, colonialist and exploitative China (in Africa) is apparent. In the same article, the



correspondent also noted that the Chinese ambassador to South Africa, Xian Xuejun had recently criticised "some Western politicians and media [who] tend to make irresponsible remarks on China-Africa relations, attempting to mess up our cooperation" (quoted by Smith, 2012). That the Chinese are countering the Western discourse constructing it as an exploiter rather than a developmental partner is also apparent. The discourse of China as a great power and a threat is not limited to conspiracy theorists in tabloid newspapers; it is produced and reproduced by top Western diplomats and politicians.

In an article published by *Jiefang Ribao* [Liberation Daily], Premier Wen's rebuts Straw's charge of neo-colonialism in Africa:

Africa has six hundred years of colonial history, China also experienced colonialism after 1840, China and Africa had similar experiences. China has never imposed any political conditions on its aid to Africa. This is because we believe that the factor that decides a nation's fate is ultimately its people. China is not the largest importer of oil in Africa, why do you condemn China? Is this the opinion of Africa? Or is it Western opinion? (Zhao *et al*, 2009; Author's translation).

That the top leadership in China responds directly to criticisms of the nature of its engagements in Africa makes it abundantly clear that the discourse of Chinese colonialism in Africa, a variation of China as a great power discourse, is produced, reproduced and openly contested by top politicians in the West and in China. In 2007, *Beijing Review*, China's official magazine for an overseas audience, syndicated an article originally published in the *Asian Times* arguing against the discourse that China was a new colonist in Africa (Jian, 2007a; Jian 2007b). The author Jian argues that it is the responsibility of sovereign African governments to regulate Chinese investments in their own countries.

However, the construction of China as a great power does not necessarily mean China is portrayed in a negative light. As China grows and becomes increasingly intertwined in world affairs expectations of it in terms of bearing greater responsibility in the international order, be it financial, economic or peacekeeping is rising. Typifying this expectation for China to play a greater role in the world and in Africa, Taylor writes: "although Beijing bristles at being singled out for criticism, the fact that it is a rising and

potentially great power means it can no longer hide behind the curtain of the developing world” (Taylor, 2009: 181).

## **CONCLUSION**

This chapter identified, explained, traced the genealogies and detailed two opposing identities of China. In the first, the basic discourse of China as a great power and as a threat is produced by top Western leaders since Kaiser Willem II. China is an Other, different from the Christian, democratic Self of the West. It is in response to this basic discourse from the West that the Chinese communist government has produced a radically different counter discourse. In the Chinese discourse, China is a poor developing country that was recently victimized by the colonialist West. It holds in common experiences of exploitation by Western countries with other Third World countries.

The most consistent articulation of its identity for the Chinese communists has been its alliance with the Third World. This discourse has led to Chinese aid of liberation movements in Africa and the building of the TanZam Railway line. It continues to be reproduced through China’s Africa aid policy and its approach to peacebuilding in Africa. In searching for an explanatory account of the PRC’s evolving policy on UNKPOs and its emerging approach to peacebuilding, it is important to keep in mind that Chinese blue helmets are part and parcel of the Chinese discourse as a developing country.

In the next chapter, the two identities identified and described will be utilized and expanded upon so that the evolution of Chinese position and policy on UNPKOs can be explained.



## **CHAPTER FIVE: GREAT POWER VERSUS THIRD WORLD COUNTRY: TRACING CHINA'S EVOLVING POLICY ON UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS**

The two basic discourses, the Third World country discourse and great power discourse, articulate radically different constructions of temporal, spatial and ethical identities, and they create very different scopes for Chinese policy on UNPKOs and African security. The Third World discourse constructs a China that needs to defend itself and other Third World countries against unilateral and neo-colonial Western interference. Through this discourse, China is seen to defend the interests of the Third World/developing countries against the hegemonic exploitation and arbitrary imposition of Western might. In the Western media, China is constructed as a powerful threat to Africa, as colonising and exploiting the continent. On the one hand, from the media, China is constructed as powerful and it can be threatening by colonising and exploiting Africa (China in Africa: Never too late to scramble, 2006; Harman, 2007). On the other hand, though, in Western academic discourse, China is also constructed as a potential Western ally: able to be 'socialised' (Fravel, 1996; Gill and Reilly, 2000; Tull, 2006). From this viewpoint, China, if it could be persuaded to embrace and engage with the liberal peace, would provide additional legitimacy, personnel and expertise to the project of the liberal peace (Saferworld, 2011).

As was shown in chapter four, the CCP leadership, when they first came to power, saw their successful Peasant Revolution as a model that could be followed by other colonised countries. The CCP began to articulate the cause of Afro-Asian Third World Solidarity shortly after its attendance at the Bandung Conference in 1955. After the Sino-Soviet split in 1960, the PRC began to actively construct and articulate its identity as a part of, and leading the struggle within, the Third World. This Third World identity was given form during Zhou Enlai's Africa tour in 1963-64, during which the Eight Principles of Foreign Aid were announced. These principles articulated the equality and camaraderie between Chinese and African countries. The Chinese aid policy was described as not "alms giving", but rather as assistance between comrades. In contemporary Chinese discourse, the Chinese were constructed as equal to their African counterparts; Beijing emphasised that Chinese experts in Africa were never to be given better pay and work conditions than their African equivalents. This equality was directed at traditional Western aid, where aid

workers lived in superior conditions. By constructing the Chinese self as equal with its African comrades, China identified the Western other as colonialist and imperialist.

The great power discourse has a long history in the West. In modern history, the Chinese have been constructed as the 'yellow peril' – unscrupulous, immoral and numerically superior. In the gold rush areas of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the yellow peril described competition from the yellow race against the civilised white traders and miners in California, Australia and on the Transvaal in South Africa (Yap and Leong Man, 1996). Zhou Enlai's Africa Tour of 1963-64 and subsequent communist Chinese aid and military advisor presence in Africa caused a great deal of alarm among Western observers, who feared a Maoist revolution in Africa (Hutchinson, 1975; Snow, 1988). Soon after the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s, Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations* rekindled latent fear of the Chinese by constructing the notion of a 'Sinic Zone', and the idea that East Asians were the next potential challenger to the West (Huntington, 1993b; Huntington, 2003). The rapid emergence of China in Africa at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century rekindled the fear of the Chinese as a rising challenge to Western influence. Much commentary, to the effect that China wished to exploit and colonise Africa, ensued (Malone, 2008).

In conducting a foreign policy discourse analysis of China's shifting policy on UNPKOs, the two basic discourses will be used to examine how they were used to produce and reproduce existing identities in justifying either maintaining the original policy or in changing the policy – in Hansen's phrase, how they are used to "stabilize both their representations of identity and the link between identities and policy" (Hansen, 1996: 113). In this chapter I trace the evolution of Beijing's UNPKO policy discourse by examining how key events are "responded to by official foreign policy discourse" (Hansen, 1996: 113). The key events chosen in this chapter are those constituted by governments, international institutions and the news media. These events have been chosen on the basis that they created a foreign policy crisis for the Chinese, in that they had the potential to destabilise existing discourses.

Chinese policy on UNPKOs has varied from condemnation of UNPKOs, to silence about them, to participation in them, and, finally, to beginning to articulate a Chinese model for UNPKOs. I will show in this chapter that this policy evolution has been a result of Beijing responding to each foreign policy crisis key event.

This chapter is arranged as follows. First, the evolution of UNPKOs, from traditional peacekeeping to non-traditional peacekeeping/peacebuilding, will be presented. It is important to note that not only has Beijing's attitude to UNPKOs been evolving, but that the nature of UNPKOs has also evolved. After establishing the history and nature of UNPKOs, this chapter will offer a discourse analysis of the evolving Chinese policy on UNPKOs. The discourse analysis is conducted by tracing Chinese adaptation to foreign policy crisis key events and examining whether China rearticulated or readjusted its articulation of identity in terms of the two basic discourses.

## **THE EVOLUTION OF UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS**

### *Traditional Peacekeeping*

UNPKOs do not have formal basis in the UN Charter. The concept of UNPKOs was first tested during the Suez Crisis of 1956, when UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld organised the first armed military force of the UN – the UN Emergency Force (UNEF) (Bellamy, Williams and Griffin, 1993: 31; Fravel, 1996: 1105). This was established by Hammarskjöld to prevent an escalation of violence and to give the belligerents time and space to negotiate a peace settlement (Fravel, 1996: 1105). The UNEF oversaw the drawing-down of foreign forces from Egyptian territory, and then took up position along the Egypt-Israel border. The mandate clearly stated that UNEF should “refrain from any activity of a political character in a Host State” and should in no way “influence the military balance in the present conflict and, thereby, the political balance affecting efforts to settle the conflict” (*Regulations for the United Nations Emergency Force*, February 20, 1957; *Second and Final Report of the Secretary-general on the Plan for an Emergency International United Nations Force*, November 6, 1956, UN doc. A/3302, quoted in Paris, 2004: 14). The first formal UNPKO began in 1948, when the UNSC authorised military observers to monitor the armistice agreement between Israel and its Arab neighbours (*UN Peacekeeping – History*). Peacekeeping, as it was originally conceived, dealt with issues arising from decolonisation, and operated in a world dominated by the Cold War.

At its inception, traditional peacekeeping missions were conceived as *ad hoc* and not as a comprehensive plan for collective action (Bellamy, Williams and Griffin, 1993: 100). The operational guidelines formulated by Hammarskjöld evolved into the principles of

traditional peacekeeping, namely: 1) consent of the parties, 2) impartiality, and 3) non-use of force except in self-defence and defence of the mandate (*United Nations Peacekeeping – Principles of UN Peacekeeping*). It is important to point out that UNPKOs are distinct from peace enforcement as envisaged in Chapter VII of the UN Charter. Chapter VII of UN Charter envisages peace enforcement in those cases where consent of the parties is not necessary (*Charter of the United Nations*, Chapter VII; Taylor, 2009: 136).

There are several reasons for traditional peacekeeping to engage in a specifically defined role. First, UN Charter Article 2 (7) expressly prohibits the UN from intervening in matters falling within the domestic jurisdiction of any state. Secondly, belligerent parties are unlikely to accept a UNPKO force that has a mandate beyond simply monitoring a ceasefire (Paris, 2004: 15). Thirdly, the two Cold War superpowers were opposed to the UN becoming involved in the concerns of their respective allies and client states (Findlay, 2003: 49; Paris, 2004: 15). Given that the US and the USSR were both veto-wielding permanent members of the UNSC, it was unlikely that any UNPKOs that interfered with their respective strategic interests would be authorised. Finally, given the ideological stand-off between liberal democracy and the people's democracy of the communist bloc, and given the ideological neutrality of the UN, it was impossible for a state-building project to follow any particular model of governance (Paris, 2004: 16).

The principles of non-interference in domestic affairs were followed strictly by all but two of the pre-1989 UNPKOs (Paris, 2004: 14). These were the United Nations Operation in the Congo (ONUC) in 1960 and the establishment of the United Nations Temporary Executive Authority (UNTEA) in western New Guinea in 1962-1963. Both operations were authorised because they did not interfere with the perceived strategic interests of the superpowers and both operations involved the UN becoming engaged in the domestic politics of the country. The mandate of the ONUC was to monitor the withdrawal of Belgium forces from the newly independent Republic of Congo and to provide limited security assistance (*United Nations – Completed Peacekeeping Operations*, Republic of Congo). The mandate of the UNTEA was to facilitate the transfer of sovereignty of western New Guinea from the Netherlands to Indonesia (*United Nations – West New Guinea – UNSF*).

As the rivalry between superpowers ended, impediments for the UN to play a more intrusive role in post-civil war situations disappeared. In addition, former client regimes of former superpowers that had depended on aid to prop up their neopatrimonial rule saw their aid money dry up. The inability of client regimes such as those in Zaire and Somalia to maintain their rule through foreign aid resulted in the flaring up of civil wars (Paris, 2004: 16). Given the victory of liberal democracy over communism, the model of the liberal democratic peace and free market became the obvious one for post-conflict societies to emulate. All fourteen major peacebuilding missions launched between 1989 and 1999 were underpinned by a common strategy – immediate democratisation and marketisation (Paris, 2004: ix).

### *Non-Traditional peacekeeping*

The new generation of UNPKOs that arose after the Cold War were multi-dimensional in nature and designed to “ensure the implementation of comprehensive peace agreements and assist in laying the foundations for sustainable peace” (*United Nations Peacekeeping – Post-Cold War Surge*). UNPKOs have evolved since their *ad hoc* inception and continue to evolve. Different ideal types of peacekeeping have been identified by different writers; some writers distinguish between first and second generation peacekeeping missions, designated ‘traditional’ and ‘non-traditional’, with second generation identified as that which emerged in the post-Cold War era. Others identify three, four, five or six distinct generations (Stahle, 2006: 14).

As the Cold War ended, the numbers of UNPKOs increased drastically and the nature of UNPKOs became more complex and more intrusive, tackling intrastate conflicts (Findlay, 1996; Stahle, 2008: 637). This new kind of peacekeeping differed from traditional peacekeeping in that the operations 1) were established in the absence of a political settlement; 2) were without the consent of all parties; 3) were authorised to use force; or 4) were under national (not UN) command (Fravel, 1996: 1106).

This new era of peacekeeping came under close scrutiny when American soldiers were killed in Somalia and when UN peacekeepers failed to protect civilians in both Rwanda and Bosnia. As a result of these failures, the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan invited the former Algerian foreign minister, Lakhdar Brahimi, to conduct a comprehensive



review of all aspects of UNPKOs (Findlay, 2002; Stahle, 2008). In 2000 the Brahimi Report, reviewing all facets of UNPKOs, was issued by a high-level panel chaired by Brahimi. The Brahimi Report effectively codified changes to UNPKOs since the end of the Cold War (Taylor, 2009: 138-139). It made four proposals:

- 1) Peacekeepers need to be expressly mandated to be able to use force more advantageously to defend themselves, their mission, *and* civilians under threat of attack.
- 2) The UN should never mandate a peace operation prior to marshalling the necessary resources to execute the mission.
- 3) There needs to be improved discussion between the Security Council and the contributing countries to any peace operations.
- 4) A diversified approach to peacebuilding, including the training of local police, strengthening the legal machinery in post-conflict states, disarmament, demobilisation, and reintegration of former soldiers and the advancement of human rights – basically the construction of liberal-democratic states under the rubric of what might be termed the liberal peace ( *United Nations* -Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations; Taylor 2009: 138)

As a result of the Brahimi Report recommendations and the experiences of UNPKOs in Kosovo and East Timor, peace support operations emerged. Peace support operations are multifunctional operations that combine robust military force with a strong civilian component (Stahle, 2008). Driving peace support operations is the underlying belief that the most stable form of government is the liberal democracy. As such, peace support operations seek to transform post-war societies into democratic and free market capitalist states (Paris, 2004).

## **CHINA AND UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS**

There are an increasing number of book chapters, articles and policy papers examining and accounting for the shifting Chinese position on UNPKOs ( Fravel, 1996; Gill and Reilly, 2000; Gill and Huang, 2009; He, 2007; Hirono and Lanteigne, 2011; Huang, 2011; Lanteigne, 2011; Richardson, 2011; Saferworld, 2011; Stahle, 2006; Stahle, 2008; Suzuki, 2011; Taylor, 2009: 133-160; Zhao, 2011. China's reluctance to intervene in the domestic affairs of foreign states is premised on the principle of sovereignty. The importance of the principle of sovereignty and non-interference in domestic affairs is central to China for two reasons. First, Beijing does not wish to have foreign interference in its own domestic affairs. This is especially true with regard to its government of peripheral regions such as Xinjiang, Tibet and Taiwan (Carlson, 2006: 223; Pang, 2005; Wu and Taylor, 2011: 138). In addition, and equally importantly, China's traditional stance on sovereignty is based on the memory of the Century of Humiliation and China's loss of sovereignty at the hands of Western imperialism (Carlson, 2006; Pang, 2005; Wu and Taylor 2011). While there are now a good number of commentaries accounting for factors that motivate China's shifting attitude, there are still shortcomings and gaps in our knowledge. Huang points out that there "has been limited analysis to help systematically explain why China has become more involved in UN peacekeeping" (Huang, 2011: 257). Hirono and Lanteigne point out that the "most contentious debate... is not only about the extent to which China has adopted the norms, but also about the extent to which it has been reshaping the international order and the rules and norms of the multilateral institutions it has integrated itself into" (2011: 244). They observe that the most pertinent question is whether China was a "norm-taker" or "norm-maker" (2011: 244). Examining China's attitude towards UNPKOs – specifically whether it accepts the rules or is actively reshaping the rules – can help to identify Beijing's attitude towards global governance, collective security and multilateral intervention (Fravel, 1996: 1103). A short answer to the question posed by Hirono and Lanteigne is that China has always viewed, and continues to view, UNPKOs from its own standpoint. As will be shown, Beijing's understanding of UNPKOs – both traditional and non-traditional – is based on its own worldview, one shaped by its assessment of the international situation and its own domestic development. Beijing has consistently and explicitly voiced its attitude, at times aggressively, towards UNPKOs (Fravel, 1996; He, 2007). Since entering the UN in 1971, Beijing has been keen to demonstrate its 'independent foreign policy' with

regard to UNPKOs, going so far as to invent the practice of abstaining from the UNSC vote, so as to indicate its disapproval of collective security actions led by the West (Kim, 1979; Morphet, 2000).

Ever since the Eight Principles of Foreign Aid were announced by Zhou during his 1963-64 Africa tour, Beijing has approached developmental aid and peacebuilding in Africa from its own position. This Chinese model of aid and development has been shaped and refined according to China's own understanding and experience of development (Brautigam, 2010). At present, the Chinese development model emphasises local context, political stability and economic development.<sup>9</sup> This emphasis on stability and non-interference is over and above the focus on institutional reform, multi-party democratic reforms and good governance ("Stability comes first in a country's development", 2008).

In this thesis, the systematic analysis of shifting Chinese attitude towards UNPKOs (both traditional and non-traditional) is carried out in terms of a framework within which foreign policy is seen as a discursive practice. Beijing's articulation of its identity as a Third World country, and as a victim of colonial intervention, legitimates its attitude that UNPKOs are imperial impositions on Third World countries. The articulation of its identity as a Great Power – present since the founding of the PRC, but frustrated by China's lack of national strength before Reform and Opening-up – is becoming more prominent as the world becomes increasingly aware of China's "economic reach and significance" (Breslin, 2010: 52). It is as a result of its growing confidence in its role within the UN that Beijing has begun to participate in existing multilateral peacekeeping projects (Pang, 2005; He, 2007; Zhao, 2011).

## **DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF THE EVOLVING CHINESE POLICY ON UNPKOS**

### *The Korean War: The United Nations as a Tool for Imperial Intervention*

After a long and protracted conflict between the communists and nationalists, punctuated by an eight year war with Japan, the nationalists retreated to Taiwan and the PRC was established in October 1949 (Fairbank, 1992). Within eight months of Mao's proclamation that *zhongguo renmin zhanqilai le* [the Chinese people have stood up] at Tiananmen Square,

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<sup>9</sup> Interview with He Wenping, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing, 20 July, 2010.

the Korean War broke out. In February 1951, the PRC became the first country to be branded an 'aggressor' by the UN General Assembly (General Assembly Resolution 498). At the time, the Soviet Union, a veto-wielding ally of the new communist China, was boycotting the UNSC on the grounds that the 'China' seat was still occupied by the defeated nationalists (Fairbank, 1992).

With its hold on power still insecure and unrecognised by the majority of the international community, the new CCP regime in Beijing was eager for the UN to recognise it as the legitimate government of China. Between the founding of the PRC, on October 1, 1949, and June, 30, 1950, nine cablegrams were sent to various agencies of the UN by Beijing, all concerning communist Chinese representation in the organisation (Weng, 1966: 680).

The Korean War was the result of the physical division of Korea after World War II. After this division, UN troops controlled the territory south of the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel and North Korean troops the territory north of the parallel. On June, 25, 1950, North Korean forces invaded and pushed south to the Pusan Perimeter around Pusan port. Two months into the hostilities, the US-led UN forces were able to hold the Pusan Perimeter and to resupply themselves through the Pusan port, and began to repel the North Korean army from south of the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel. General MacArthur, pushed by Washington, decided to push the North Korean army aggressively back into North Korea, almost to the Yalu River – the North Korean border with China. This was read as an act of aggression towards China and prompted a re-evaluation of Beijing's attitude towards the UN. Mao came to the conclusion that US hostility was the motivation behind the UN attack. When the General Assembly approved the crossing of the parallel on October 7 and UN troops moved the next day, Beijing initiated the 'resist America and aid Korea' campaign, supplying North Korea with up to 340 000 fighting men (Weng, 1966: 680).

Being branded an aggressor by the UN and being denied international recognition contributed to Beijing's sense of being under siege and confirmed for Beijing that its sovereignty was still subject to interference by 'imperialist forces'. It is important to note that at this stage Beijing did not oppose the UN; rather, it was opposed to what it saw as the imperialist manipulation by the US and other capitalist powers of the UN (Tzou, 1998: 105; Weng, 1966;). Beijing was careful not to articulate its displeasure at the UN, and rather aimed

its criticisms at the US. This was clearly illustrated when China protested at the General Assembly's condemnation of its invasion of Tibet in 1959. A commentary of the *New China News Agency* claimed that:

Another farce aimed at slandering China, intervening in China's internal affairs and poisoning the international atmosphere, *solely directed by United States imperialism*"(*People's Daily*, June 18, 1958, cited by Bloomfield, 1966: 662).

Beijing's view that UN peacekeeping missions violated state sovereignty was consistently held into the 1980s. Beijing called the 1958 United Nations Observer Group in Lebanon (UNOGIL) an "instrument of US-British intervention" (*People's Daily*, June 18, 1958, cited by Bloomfield, 1966: 662). In 1960, when the Soviet Union voted in favour of UNSC Resolution 143 to establish a peacekeeping mission in the Congo (ONUC), the Chinese charged Khrushchev with helping the US imperialists to suppress the Congolese people. China described the UN mission as US imperialism operating "under the UN Flag" and claimed that the real purpose of ONUC was to maintain Western domination and block Congolese independence (Bloomfield, 1966: 662; Tzou, 1998: 107). When the Soviet Union eventually stated its intention to make a voluntary contribution toward the UN Emergency Force and the UN Operation in the Congo, it was denounced by the Chinese as co-operating with "imperialism and in suppression of world revolution" (cited in Bloomfield, 1966: 662).

The Korean Armistice Agreement was signed on July 27, 1953. From the spring of 1954, Beijing's strategy towards the UN changed. Instead of actively seeking admission, it adopted a wait-and-see approach. Between January 1954 and December 1961, only nine cablegrams were sent by Beijing to UN organs, and none of them were to demand restoration of its representation in the UN (Weng, 1966: 686). Beijing's waning interest in the UN can be assessed from the decreasing number of articles on the UN in its premier foreign language mouthpiece, the *Peking Review*. While there were five articles on the UN system in 1967, the articles decreased to one a year between 1968 and 1969 (Kim, 1974: 301-302). Kim points out that Beijing's position at this time was that the UN was controlled by the US:

As a matter of fact... the United Nations has degenerated into a dirty international political stock exchange in the grip of a few big powers; the sovereignty of other nations, particularly that of small ones, is often bought and sold by them like shares (*People's Daily* , January 10, 1965, cited in Kim, 1979: 100).

Exasperated at China's exclusion from the UN, Premier Zhou Enlai even proposed the establishment of a new UN in 1965:

The United Nations is under the control of the United States and other big powers. It increasingly serves the imperialists, and opposes the Asian, African, and Latin American peoples. If the United Nations does not correct its mistakes and reorganize itself, there should be a new revolutionary United Nations to replace it ( *Renmin Shouce* 1965, cited in Tzou, 1998: 104).

Beijing's attitude towards the UN between 1950 and the late 1960s shifted from hope to disappointment, and then to disillusionment, and eventually, in 1965, hostility. This hostility can be seen in both Zhou's announcement for a new UN and in the declaration by the Chinese foreign minister in 1967:

Speaking frankly, the Chinese people are not at all interested in sitting in the United Nations, a body manipulated by the United States, a place for playing power politics, a stock exchange for the United States and the Soviet Union to strike political bargains, and an organ to serve the U.S. policies of aggression and war" (Foreign Minister Ch'en Yi, September 29, 1967, cited in Kim, 1979: 101).

The PRC's position on the UN from the 1950s to the late 1960s was largely that the UN was controlled by the imperialist forces of the US. After the Sino-Soviet Split, China began to charge Soviet assistance in UNPKOs as 'revisionism' and assistance of the US policy of aggression. Beijing articulated a discourse of itself as Third World leader, arguing against continued imperialism and interference in the sovereignty of Third World countries.

According to Beijing, the UN was controlled by the US and UNPKOs were tools to serve its imperialist ambitions.

*China Joins the United Nations: A Period of Non-Participation in UNPKOs*

While there was only one article a year on the UN in the *Peking Review* from 1968 to –1969, in 1970 there were five articles, and in 1971 there were 15 articles before October 25 and another 37 articles after that date. In 1972 there were 88 articles on the UN (Kim, 1974: 301-302). The end of the Cultural Revolution in 1969 coincided with the beginning of a new foreign policy (Kim, 1979: 101). The new foreign policy adopted by the PRC leadership demonstrated “an extraordinary – almost unprecedented – degree of flexibility and moderation” (Kim, 1974: 303). Between October, 1970 and October, 1971, China normalised its relations with fourteen nations (Kim, 1973: 103). The polemical indictments against the UN disappeared and China began to actively campaign to join the UN. African support was crucial for China’s admission to the UN. In its bid to rally support, the PRC’s aid diplomacy accelerated from US\$13 million in 1969 to US\$728 million in 1970 (the USSR and East European countries jointly extended US\$394 million in 1970) (Kim, 1973: 103). In sum, China’s Africa policy in the Mao era was driven by its international position, its anti-US and anti-USSR stance, and its need to join the UN.<sup>10</sup> Beijing’s diplomatic efforts were rewarded and, on the back of support from newly independent African countries, it was admitted to the UN on October 25, 1971.

Contrary to what many observers expected, China was not disruptive at all in the UNSC (Morphet, 2000). It was exceedingly cautious and conservative in its voting in the Security Council and in its general dealings with the UN. Throughout the 1970s Beijing’s view on peacekeeping was the same as that which it held during the 1960s – that peacekeeping was imperial interference with Third World countries’ internal affairs and was driven by the US and the USSR to control their spheres of interest. However, while Beijing held this view, it chose to lay low and bide its time. The Chinese delegates adopted the strategy of non-participation in the voting process of the Security Council, so as to signal its disapproval while not disrupting proceedings (Morphet, 2000). For the first ten

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<sup>10</sup> Interview with Xia Liping, China Foreign Affairs University, 14 July, 2010.

years of its membership of the UNSC (1971-1981) China abstained from voting in three peacekeeping missions, and did not contribute troops or money to peacekeeping (Fravel, 1996: 1103). It also did not participate in the General Assembly on matters to do with the financing of UNPKOs (Tzou, 1998: 110). In the Security Council on October 25, 1973 China expressed its views on UNPKOs:

China has always been opposed to the dispatch of the so-called 'peacekeeping forces'. We maintain the same position with regard to the present situation in the Middle East. Such a practice can only pave the way for further international intervention and control with the Super-Powers as the behind-the-scenes boss (cited in Morphet, 2000: 158).

Beijing was not obstructive and did not use its veto power to cause havoc in the UNSC. Given the vivid and polemical expressions of its earlier frustrations and then the diplomatic efforts exerted to enter the UN, it is clear that international (and domestic) legitimacy through membership of the UN was important for the PRC. Upon its accession, Beijing was not going to jeopardise its hard-won recognition. It therefore did not take the neo-colonial fight on behalf of the Third World against the superpowers to the UNSC. In the first decade of its UNSC membership, Beijing's articulated a far mellower identity. While it continued to condemn Western imperialism and neo-colonialism (as it still does today), it did not wield its veto to actively prevent UNPKOs from been carried out.

#### *Reform and Opening-up: Cautious participation*

After the death of Mao, the reformist Deng took over the helm of the PRC. Under Deng, "class struggle gave way to economic reform and development" (Fairbank, 1992: 406). At the Eleventh National Conference of the Communist Party of China in 1978, the policy of Reform and Opening-up [*gaige kaifang*] was adopted. The decision to open China's doors and pursue a reformist strategy was reaffirmed at its Tenth Party Congress in 1982, when Beijing changed its 'basic line' [*jiben luxian*] and declared that it would pursue a foreign policy of independence (Wang, 1999: 75).



In December 1981, China voted in favour of UNSC Resolution 495 on the extension of the ongoing UN peacekeeping force in Cyprus and agreed to pay its share of the UNPKO expenditure (Fravel, 1993: 1104; He, 2007: 20). Since 1981, China has voted in favour of all UNPKOs that carried out traditional peacekeeping tasks or managed transitions (Morphet, 2000: 160-161; Stahle, 2008: 639). The remainder of the decade of the 1980s saw a gradual increase in Chinese involvement in UNPKOs. In 1984, China presented its seven principles on peacekeeping to the UN; these seven principles expressed its agreement in principle to peacekeeping and emphasised the need for consent and respect for sovereignty (Zhou, 1999: 83). In November 1988, China joined the UN Special Peacekeeping Committee. In March 1989, Chinese Ambassador Yu Mengjia called on the international community to give “powerful support” to UN peacekeeping. Through the 1980s, “China started to perceive UN peacekeeping through a more functional and less ideological lens” (Wang, 1999: 76).

After the Cultural Revolution and the passing of Mao, Deng’s policy of Reform and Opening up translated into a gradual normalisation of Chinese foreign policy. The radical policy of world revolution in domestic and foreign policy under Mao was replaced by a more sober and pragmatic outlook under Deng. The growth of the Chinese economy and the increasing normalisation of relations with the West and the UN translated into greater participation in UNPKOs, something that would have been unthinkable for the Chinese between the 1960s and 1970s. It is also important to note here that the Chinese focus on Africa waned in the 1980s, with less aid given and fewer high-level political visits made (Taylor, 1998; Li, 2006a).

#### *The End of the Cold War and the Crisis of the Tiananmen Square Massacre*

Beijing supported the UNSC Resolution 660 condemning Iraq and demanding its withdrawal from Kuwait in 1990. Beijing’s support of this first post-Cold War military conflict needs to be observed in the context of the political and economic isolation Beijing was subject to after its violent suppression of protesters in Tiananmen Square in 1989 (Carlson, 2006: 222; Kim, 1994b: 422-424). While Beijing insisted that its support for UNSC 660 was a principled stand and the US argued that there was no connection between the vote and Sino-US relations, the Bush administration lifted US sanctions on China soon

after the resolution was passed (Carlson, 2006: 222). Beijing's misgivings about the US-led intervention in Iraq became evident when China later abstained from UNSC Resolution 678, where the use of all means necessary to force Iraq out of Kuwait was adopted. Explaining China's abstention, the Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen urged the UN to use "great caution and avoid taking hasty actions on such a major question as authorising some member states to take military actions against another member state" (*Xinhua*, November 28, 1990, cited in Carlson, 2006: 222). China also absented itself from later resolutions regarding no-fly zones (UNSC Resolution 687; UNSC Resolution 688; Carlson, 2006: 222).

While Beijing was certainly uncomfortable with the post-Cold War development of greater intervention in international politics, its support for UNSC Resolution 660 marked the first major step in supporting interventionism. Just a year earlier, in 1989, China had dispatched its first peacekeepers, sending out twenty non-military personnel to supervise Namibia's election (Tzou, 1998: 113; He, 2007). In 1990, it sent five military observers to the UN Truce Supervision Organisation (UNTSO) to monitor a ceasefire, and in 1991 it sent twenty military observers to the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Mission UNIKOM, along the Iraq-Kuwait border (He, 2007; Tzou, 1998).

Eventually, Beijing made a complete change in policy, abandoning its support for proletarian revolution in Africa. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, Beijing began to back UNSC resolutions after civil wars between liberation movements and governments. It voted in support of establishing the UN Angola Verification Mission I (UNAVEM I) (UNSC Resolution 626, passed on December 20, 1988) and UNAVEM II (UNSC Resolution 696, passed on May 30, 1991). It also voted in favour of the establishment and extension of the UN Operation in Mozambique (ONUMOZ) (UNSC Resolution 882, passed on 5 November 1993).

The foreign policy crisis after the Tiananmen Square Incident forced Beijing to reassess its foreign policy. On the one hand, it chose to be cooperative and pragmatic and voted in favour of UNSC Resolution 660 with the Western coalition against Iraq. At the same time, in an effort to break through its international isolation, China again turned to Africa for support. In response, African political leaders were supportive of Beijing's hard-line stance against the protestors. Angola's foreign minister expressed "support for the resolute action to quell the counter-revolutionary rebellion" (cited in Taylor, 1998: 447).

In July 1989, a month after the Tiananmen Square massacre, Foreign Minister Qian Qichen visited Botswana, Angola, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Mozambique and Lesotho to explain the Chinese position and shore up international support (Brautigam, 2009: 68).

From June 1989 and through the decade of the 1990s, Beijing conducted a foreign policy that was, according to Kim, “designed to challenge scholars and policymakers concerned about the shape of things to come in post-Cold War international life” as Beijing “try to be all things to all states on all global issues” (Kim, 1998: 4). On the one hand, China was ready to be the Third World comrade of old with African states and, at the same time, be the socialised and cooperative emerging power that the West prefers. Throughout the 1990s, China continued to become more involved in UNPKOs, reluctantly but steadily approving more UNPKOs. It also redoubled its efforts at courting the support of African elites through high-level visits and aid programmes.

From the time of its reluctant acquiescence in the Gulf War, China’s UNSC voting behaviour in the 1990s on UN missions in Somalia, Rwanda, Haiti and Bosnia showed that it continued to struggle with interventionist developments (Stahle, 2008: 639-642). On the issue of the use of force in Bosnia in 1992, China abstained in three votes and explained its abstention as being as a result of its policy against the use of force (Stahle, 2008: 640; UNSC Resolutions 770, 776, and 781). China similarly abstained on the UNSC vote on the UN Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) in 1994, citing lack of consent and the use of force. On Haiti, China abstained in 1994, explaining its abstention as against the role of “certain group of states” (US-led West) and against the creation of a “dangerous precedent” (unilateral interventionism) for UNPKOs (cited by Stahle, 2008: 643). This abstention indicated Chinese disapproval of a US-led multinational force to provide a secure environment for the UN Mission in Haiti (UNMIH). The Chinese demand for reducing military personnel in UNMIH suggests that Beijing was concerned about US influence in Haiti (Stahle, 2008: 643).

Examination of China’s UNSC voting record in the 1990s shows a gradual shift on China’s part towards support of ‘non-traditional’ peacekeeping (Carlson, 2006: 224-225; Stahle, 2008: 641-642). Carlson notes that by the mid 1990s, “the official Chinese position on multi-lateral intervention was one of cautious acceptance and incremental change” (2006: 224). China’s gradual acceptance of interventionism is reflected in the writing of its

legal scholars. Xu argued in 1992 in *Zhongguo Faxue* (Chinese Legal Studies) that all states have indirect human rights obligations against genocide, slavery and racism. In cases such as these, the international community has an obligation to act and this cannot be construed as interference in domestic affairs (cited by Carlson 2006: 225).

In the mid 1990s, arguments that sovereignty was not absolute began to appear in the writings of China's foreign policy community. Wang, a researcher at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, argued that "the practice of sovereignty is limited by the protection of human rights" (Wang, 1996, cited by Carlson, 2006: 226). In 1997, a *Beijing Review* editorial argued that state security interests had become interconnected to such a degree that it was necessary to approach the idea of security from a more conciliatory standpoint (*Beijing Review*, August 18-24, 1997; Lanteigne, 2011: 317). By the late 1990s, Beijing's confidence in its own national strength has risen to such an extent that it was confident to engage in multilateral security cooperations and it no longer feared that its own sovereignty and territorial integrity might be interfered with by other powers (Lanteigne, 2011: 317; Wuthnow, 2010: 65).

### *China as a Great Power?*

In 1999, as the announcement on the pro-independence referendum in East Timor was made, "mass killing and looting took place" (He, 2007: 30). The UNSC announced that it was to act under Chapter VII of the Charter of UN and authorised a multinational force, the International Force in East Timor (INTERFET), to take all necessary measures to restore peace and security in East Timor, and authorised the temporary transfer of security and policing authority to the UN (He, 2007: 30; Lanteigne, 2011: 315). On October 22, 1999 China voted in favour of UNSC Resolution 1272 establishing the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET). The UNTAET mandated the UN to provide security, maintain security, ensure the running of administration, and support capacity-building for self-government in East Timor (He, 2007: 30; Stahle, 2006: 40).

The complete support China gave to the International Force in East Timor (INTERFET) and the UNTAET was a watershed in Chinese participation in non-traditional peacekeeping. In contrast with its reluctance to accept an UNPKO with an enforcement

mandate in Somalia in the early 1990s, China's full cooperation and support of UNTAET signalled its acceptance of an UNPKO with a peace-enforcement mandate (He 2007: 31).

According to He, China's UNPKOs have been deliberately formulated to serve its strategic interests in terms of China's 'peaceful rise' (He, 2007: 48). In turn, this discourse of a 'peaceful rise' was always intended to address Western concerns about China as a great power (He, 2007: 49; Suettinger, 2004: 7).

### *The Darfur Crisis*

The Darfur Crisis in southern Sudan that began in 2003 necessitated a UNSC response that was qualitatively different for China compared to previous UNPKOs, given the prominence of Chinese oil investments in Sudan and the importance of Sino-Sudan ties for both countries. At the time, Sudan was China's third-largest trading partner in Africa. Sudan was also the top recipient of Chinese "net non-financial overseas direct investment" until the end of 2005, and ranked the ninth-largest recipient of China's foreign direct investment (FDI) in 2005 (Large, 2008: 286).

China did not oppose the deployment of UN troops to Darfur, but it refused an UN peace-enforcement operation that would send blue helmets to Sudan without Khartoum's consent (Holslag, 2008: 74). As Holslag points out, even as Beijing was resisting the deployment of a UN force in Darfur – insisting on the principle of acquiring prior consent – it had several good motivations for security to be restored. First, escalating violence could trigger Western unilateral intervention that would change China's own leading position in Sudan. Second, the AU had requested that a UN force be sent to replace its own under-resourced troops and China's obstructions would strain its relations with the AU and its member countries. Third, with the restoration of diplomatic relations with Chad in 2006, China had a "belt of energy interests stretching from Libya to Ethiopia, all around Western Sudan" (Holslag, 2008: 74-75). The Darfur question therefore centred not on whether Beijing supported a UNPKO being sent to Sudan, but how it lobbied Khartoum to consent to an UNPKO being deployed (Holslag, 2008: 75).

After the signing of the Humanitarian Ceasefire Agreement by Khartoum and two rebel groups in Darfur in April 2004, the AU approved the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) as a monitoring mission. This AU mission was hamstrung by a limited mandate

and insufficient capacity. In January 2006, the AU's Peace and Security Council officially requested UN soldiers to be sent to reinforce the AMIS (Holslag, 2008: 76). Beijing refused UNSC Resolution 1590 and Resolution 1506, insisting on the consent of the host country and therefore backing Khartoum's refusal to accept an UN force (Holslag, 2008; Wu and Taylor, 2011: 146).

Throughout 2006, China kept a low profile and conducted behind-the-scenes 'quiet diplomacy'. On August 19, 2006, Khartoum rejected the idea of replacing AMIS with an UN force and declined to attend a special meeting of the UNSC. In September 2006, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabo stated he was "very much concerned about the stability in Darfur" and that he supported sending in peacekeepers (Wen, cited in Holslag, 2008: 78). President Hu Jintao also reiterated the point when al-Bashir visited Beijing for the 2006 FOCAC Summit. After President al-Bashir wrote to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's to reject several aspects of the UN's hybrid force plan in March 2007, the Chinese repeated that "we have exercised all possible efforts, political, economic and others and advised our Sudanese brothers to accept Annan's plan" (*Briefing for Chinese and Foreign Journalists on the Darfur Issue of Sudan*, cited in Holslag, 2008: 2011). Breaking with the Chinese tradition of non-interference, the Chinese ambassador to the UN said, "[u]sually China doesn't send messages, but this time they did... It was a clear, strong message that the proposal from Kofi Annan is a good one and Sudan has to accept it" ("China, Breaking Tradition, told Sudan to adopt UN's Darfur Plan", 2007).

The shift from non-interference in domestic affairs to publicly pressuring the Khartoum regime to accept an UN-AU hybrid force was a result of intense international pressure (Holslag, 2008; Large, 2008; Wu and Taylor, 2011). The shift in Beijing's policy was made on the calculation that Beijing's protection of Khartoum in the UNSC was done at too great a reputational cost. The Chinese academic and policy-making communities have for some time noted the reputational cost of being associated with Khartoum. Zha, an energy security specialist based at Peking University, argued in 2006 that the traditional discourse of Sino-Africa relations in the framework of South-South solidarity needed to be re-examined in relation to Sudan (Zha, 2006). Pointing out that the rhetoric of Third World solidarity in African affairs was outdated, he bluntly wrote that, "as a great power, China needs to continue to acquire energy resources in Africa and at the same time,

it cannot avoid international communities' attention to Chinese influence on African economic and society development" (Zha, 2006: 54) (Author's translations).

The Darfur issue "compelled Beijing to veer between its traditional norms and economic interests on the one side, and on the other side the international pressure and the need for long term stability" (Holslag, 2009: 83). In terms of the two basic discourses, the Darfur issue presented a great challenge. On the one hand, China was the standard bearer for the Third World in protecting the principle of sovereignty against great power interference. On the other hand, China's status as Sudan's largest trading partner and investor meant that it could not stand aloof from the issue.

While, for the first time in its permanent membership of the UNSC, China actively and publicly lobbied a sovereign country to accept an international peacekeeping force, China did manage to stand its ground on not sending in UNPKOs without the consent of the sovereign government.

## **CONCLUSION: THE CONTESTING DISCOURSES OF THIRD WORLD COUNTRY AND GREAT POWER**

In this chapter, a timeline of key foreign policy events has been traced. In each case, the two basic discourses have been used to analyse the often reluctant shifts in Chinese policy regarding UNPKOs. On the one hand, a discourse of Third World solidarity has strongly motivated China to protect the principle of sovereignty and to resist any encroachment of this principle through interventionist UNPKO developments. On the other hand, as is the cases of the First Gulf War and Darfur, China had to adapt to the counter-discourse that it was a great power and therefore could not stand aloof from the situations. In the case of the Gulf War, China was not in a position to protest as it was under Western condemnation. In the case of Darfur, China was more successful at neutralising the apparent contradictions between the two basic discourses, by persuading Sudan to accept a peacekeeping force.

Identifying itself primarily as a Third World country, China's foreign policy discourse has served to prevent superpower interference in its own domestic affairs, as well as those of fellow Third World countries. Motivated by its traditional stance on sovereignty and its self-appointed leadership of the Third World, between the 1950s and

1980s, Beijing's pronouncements on UNPKOs indicated that they were the tools of former imperial powers, such as Belgium, France and Britain, and the superpowers to assert domination and control over previously colonised Third World countries. In this role, Beijing presented itself as the leader of the Third World, rallying against colonialism and imperialism.

Beijing's role in international affairs shifted as Deng led China away from a revolutionary worldview at the close of the 1970s. By the 1990s, events such as Beijing's much-praised role in not revaluing the Chinese currency following the 1997-1998 East Asian Financial crisis, the return of Hong Kong in 1997, and the return of Macau in 1999, contributed to Beijing's growing confidence as an emerging power (He, 2007: 47). At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Premier Zhu Rongji articulated China's new identity as a "responsible great power" (*fuzeren daguo*) (He, 2007: 47; Pang, 2005: 96-97).

The discourse of China as a "responsible" great power was followed by a policy of greater UNPKO engagement. As China engaged in UNPKOs, it emphasised multilateralism, consent of belligerents, poverty reduction, and respect for local conditions. Chinese peacekeepers were from engineering battalions, transportation units and medical units, projecting an image of Chinese peacekeepers with sleeves rolled up sweating in the fields with their African counterparts. As a responsible great power, Beijing emphasised and projected its identity through its UNPKO engagements as a consensus-driven responsible great power. As China gained experience and greater confidence, Beijing began to expand its capacity in UNPKOs by improving training capabilities in China (by building peacekeeping schools) and by increasing the numbers of peacekeepers in both military and police units (He, 2007: 11).

In the case of East Timor, China appears to have embraced non-traditional UNPKOs and abandoned its Third World identity. However, even as China grew in confidence as a great power, it was aware that its growing stature would be looked upon with fear by established powers, as well by the peripheral countries in Asia.

The "wrenching self-identity crisis" of China can be seen in the vacillation between adapting the discourse of peaceful rise. Zheng Bijian, the then executive vice-president of the Party School of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee and Chair of the China Reform Forum first coined the term *heping jueqi* [peaceful rise] at the 2003 Bo'ao



Forum for Asia (He, 2006: 47; Suettinger, 2004). The concept of *heping jueqi* was developed in response to the prevalence of China Threat and China Collapse theories after a trip by Zheng to the US in late 2002 (Suettinger, 2004). Zheng wanted to assure the world that China would neither challenge the world order, as 20<sup>th</sup> Century Germany and Imperial Japan had, nor collapse as a failed state (Suettinger, 2004: 3). Consistent with Zheng's assurance that China would not challenge the West for domination, Wen Jiabao used the concept of peaceful rise and assured an audience at Harvard University on December 10, 2003 that:

China today is a country in reform and opening-up and a rising power dedicated to peace... [W]hile opening still wider to the outside world, we must more fully and more consciously depend on our own structural innovation, on constantly expanding the domestic market, on converting the huge savings of the citizens into investment, and on improving the quality of the population and scientific technological progress to solve the problems of resources and the environment. Here lies the essence of China's road of peaceful rise and development (cited in Suettinger, 2004: 3).

Subsequent speeches by Weng also spoke of China's peaceful rise, and this concept was picked up by Chinese academics, with the *Liberation Army Daily* pronouncing the theory "correct and appropriate" (cited in Suettinger, 2004: 4). However, President Hu Jintao made no mention whatsoever of peaceful rise in his speech at the 2004 Bo'ao Forum for Asia. Instead, he used the term *heping yu fazhan* (peace and development) and the concept of peaceful rise was effectively abandoned (Suettinger, 2004).

In relation to Chinese polemics against UNPKOs in the 1950s and 1960s, Beijing had, by the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, made a 180 degree about turn on its UNPKO policy. On the other hand, Beijing's self-appointed position as the leader of the Third World has not changed. While it supposedly championed the Third World cause half a century ago by fighting against imperialist interventions through UNPKOs, China is using the same platform to justify its embrace of the UNPKO mechanism. Assessing its current attitude towards UNPKOs, a government mouthpiece stated:

As one of the permanent members of the UN Security Council, China reassessed its position in the international system and concluded: despite undesirable aspects, the current international order [could] drive the growth of productivity; it remain[ed] a long-term task to build a new international political and economic order; [and thus] China should join other developing countries in pushing the international political and economic order in a more sensible direction. This included using the UN peacekeeping mechanism (*China Daily*, May 29, 2007 cited in Taylor, 2009: 142).

Through greater participation in African diplomacy and in UNPKOs, the Chinese discourse is one of the Chinese approach to peacebuilding. The identity projected by China is that of a 'responsible' great power – different from the superpowers and ex-colonial great powers of the US, Britain and France. As a responsible great power and as a self-appointed leader of the developing countries, China presents itself as a consensus builder. Instead of acting unilaterally like Western great powers (admittedly, China could not do so even if it desired), China consults and respects the views of African state actors. In the case of Darfur, Beijing did its utmost to protect the principle of sovereignty and thereafter relied upon the legitimacy of the AU and the UNSC roadmap when it began to lobby the Khartoum government to accept the UN-AU hybrid peacekeeping force.



## CHAPTER SIX: THE CHINESE PERSPECTIVE ON PEACE AND SECURITY IN AFRICA

In the preface to his edited volume *China into Africa: Trade, Aid and Influence*, Rotberg observes that: “China’s current thrust into sub-Saharan Africa promises to do more for economic growth and poverty alleviation there than anything attempted by Western colonialism or the massive initiative of the international lending agencies and other donors” (2008: viii). It is in the context of the reality of China’s emergence as the economic powerhouse of Africa and the enormous potential China has to generate economic growth and alleviate poverty that an examination of the Chinese approach to peacebuilding in Africa is relevant. As the second-largest trading partner with Africa (likely to be the largest in the foreseeable future), China can do, and, in some instances has already done, more for African development than Western colonialism or international lending agencies. Given China’s ferocious need for energy and raw materials, which it uses to produce consumer goods for markets in the West and Asia, and given the abundance of these resources in Africa, China presents, arguably, the most promising external catalyst for African development.

While China has undoubted potential as a catalyst of, and engine for, African development, little is known about the Chinese potential and perspective on African security and peacebuilding. The objective of this chapter is to critically examine the Chinese understanding of Sino-Africa relations, African (in)security as well as the Chinese debates on peacekeeping and peacebuilding in Africa. In the same sense that there are different variations of the liberal peace dependent on interpretations and on the ground application (Mac Ginty and Richmond, 2009: 2); the Chinese approach to peacebuilding as a discourse is subject to flux, interpretation and adaptation to specific contexts. However, in the same sense that the liberal peace underlies and provides an organising framework for “peace interventions and reconstruction efforts in the aftermath of contemporary civil wars” (Mac Ginty and Richmond, 2009: 2), the Chinese approach to peacebuilding described in this chapter is the framework through which Beijing understands peace interventions and reconstruction efforts after a civil war in an African context.

This chapter is arranged as follows. First, the PRC’s official stance on African security will be discussed. Second, a literature review of Chinese African Studies literature,

paying specific attention to literature on African security and UNPKOs. Third, a critical assessment of China's African Studies epistemic community will be presented. Fourth, the Chinese perspective on African security will be discussed. Finally, the Chinese approach to peacebuilding will be considered.

### **THE PRC'S OFFICIAL AFRICAN SECURITY DISCOURSE**

The white paper titled *China's Africa Policy*, published on January 12, 2006, is the first, and most authoritative, official policy document from the PRC on its African policy. Reading the document, one realises that Beijing recognises the security challenges facing Africa. The document declares in its second sentence that "peace and development... remain the main themes of our times". The document closes its first paragraph with that statement that "[s]ecurity issues of various kinds are interwoven. Peace remains evasive and development more pressing". Part IV of the white paper is titled "Enhancing All Round Cooperation between China and Africa"; under the subheading "Peace and Security", it states:

- a) China will promote high-level military exchanges between the two sides and actively carry out military-related technological exchanges and cooperation. It will continue to help train African military personnel and support defence and army building of African countries for their own security.
- b) China supports the positive efforts by the AU and other African regional organizations and African countries concerned to settle regional conflicts and will provide assistance within our own capacity. It will urge the UN Security Council to pay attention to and help resolve regional conflicts in Africa. It will continue its support to and participation in UN peacekeeping operations in Africa.

It is useful to emphasise here that China is not a newcomer to Africa, and has a long history of support for many African liberation movements and governments, to whom China has sold military hardware and for whom it has provided military training (Shinn, 2008; Taylor 2006a). Being state-centric and enthusiastic to build strong relations with African governments, Beijing maintains generally good to cordial military relations with African

countries.<sup>11</sup> The principle of sovereignty remains the foundation of Beijing's foreign relations and this includes its relations with African countries; it is upon bilateral state-to-state relations that China conducts its African diplomacy. The emphasis China places on state-to-state relations can be seen in China's Africa Policy (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, People's Republic of China, 2006) whereby bilateral military cooperation takes precedence over multilateral peacekeeping missions. This is consistent with Beijing's expressed policy of respecting state sovereignty as the building block of the international order.

In the UNSC, China tends to follow the decisions made by the regional multilateral organisations. During the UNSC debate, on March 17, 2011, on UNSC Resolution 1973 to impose a 'no-fly zone' over Libya, the Chinese representative Li Baodong, serving as the rotating UNSC president at the time, reiterated China's position against the use of force before all other means are exhausted, and stated that China had serious difficulty with the resolution. He noted that "[China] had not blocked the passage of the resolution, however, because it attached great importance to the requests of the Arab League and the African Union" (UNSC, 2011).

Regarding the Chinese position on post-conflict peacebuilding, Shen Guofang, China's Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN said that:

Poverty leads to social instability, which will in turn be a threat to peace and security at the national and even regional levels... In order to uproot the causes of conflict, we must help developing countries, especially the least-developed countries, to seek economic development, eradicate poverty, curb diseases, improve the environment and fight against social injustice... The long-term objectives, however, are the eradication of poverty, development of economy as well as a peaceful and rewarding life for peace in the post-conflict countries and regions (Shen, 2001).

From the above, we can see that Beijing does recognise the serious security challenges facing Africa. Also, that it views African insecurity through a social economic lens and sees poverty as the first cause of insecurity. How does Beijing understand the solutions to the

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<sup>11</sup> Interview with military attaché of a West African embassy in Beijing, July 14, 2010.

poverty-induced insecurity in Africa and what role does Beijing see itself playing in alleviating this poverty and strengthening security in Africa?

## **LITERATURE REVIEW OF THE CHINESE DEBATE ON SINO-AFRICA RELATIONS AND CHINESE ENGAGEMENT IN AFRICAN PEACE OPERATIONS**

All Chinese articles published in academic journals, as well as in the popular press, on Sino-Africa relations support the Chinese government's official stance that China is Africa's all-weather friend. These extracts are typical:

From a political perspective, China and Africa are strategic partners based on principles of equality, mutual trust and mutual support. China respects the sovereignty, territorial integrity and right to self-determination of African countries. China supports African unity and actively participates with the international society in peacekeeping missions”(Fu and Yu, 2007: 50)(Author's translation).

“China will continue to strengthen its support of Africa in co-ordinating cooperation, participate in strategic Asia-Afro dialogue, and promote South-South cooperation and North-South dialogue. As a permanent member of the UNSC, China advocates that Africa's opinion be respected and support international community's concern and support for Africa in creating conditions for Africa to reach its millennium development goals” (An, 2006: 12)(Author's translation).

Besides the alignment with the official Chinese position, the major difference between Western and Chinese assessments of China-Africa relations has to do with the periodisation. According to Li Anshan:

Research on contemporary China-Africa relations tends to be of two extremes. Chinese scholars tend to emphasize its continuity and foreign scholars the different stages and the pragmatism [of Chinese African policy] and neglect the continuity (Li, 2006b: 9)(Author's translation).

Li recognizes that there is a difference between the PRC's relations with Africa between the 1960s– 1970s and the current period since Reform and Opening- up [*gaige kaifang*], pointing out that China's African policy today is no longer driven by ideology [*yishi xingtai*]. Li writes,

Since Reform and Opening-up [*gaige kaifang*], two factors are responsible for the major changes in China's Africa policy: the change in China's judgement of the international situation (peaceful development and engagement with the world became the two central topics) and; change in strategic thinking (emphasis shifted to domestic economic development [from world revolution]). On [China's] African policy, the first change is a shift from an emphasis on ideological alliance to greater dialogue between different ideologies. This shift was reflected in both party-to-party relations as well as state-to-state relations (Li, 2006a: 12) (Author's translation).

Li's point about the different motivation behind China's Africa policy is also made by He, a scholar at the Centre for West Asian and African Studies at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. They both point out that in the 1960s and 1970s Sino-African relations were defined by China's ideological struggle with Western and Soviet imperialism and by its solidarity with the Third World solidarity in the 1960s and 1970s, but that this is no longer the case. However, the shift away from ideological alliance in China's Africa relations does not mean an abandonment of China's core diplomatic principles. Li points out that even though China's Africa policy today is no longer decisively determined by ideology, as was the case in the 1960s and the 1970s, 'peace diplomacy' [*heping waijiao*] and 'establishment of a just international order' [*jianli gongzheng de guoji zhixu*] are not only the legacy of that era but also form a part of the continuation of 50 odd years of China's Africa policy (Li, 2006a). In today's economically globalised world, Chinese foreign policy has shifted from being driven by ideological idealism, towards being driven by pragmatic economic rationale. Similarly, its foreign policy has shifted from unconditional internationalism towards placing Chinese national interests first under the win-win principle (He, 2007).



While there is constant reference in the literature to the Reform and Opening-up, there are almost no references to the Cultural Revolution, the Great Leap Forward and other disastrous policy choices made by Mao as these discussions are officially taboo. While emphasis on the ideological struggle against Western capitalism is no longer the all-consuming subject of China's foreign relations, the 'siege mentality' that the West is hostile to China is still evident in many Chinese articles on China-Africa relations.

With regards to the importance of Africa to Chinese foreign policy and China projecting a favourable image in Africa, Luo of the Chinese Communist Party School in his 2011 article: "ruhe renshi 21 shiji shangbanshi feizhou zai zhongguo waijiao zhanlu zhong de diwei" [How to assess Africa's important position in China's diplomatic strategy in the first half of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century] argued that Africa is pivotal for Chinese foreign policy strategy. He wrote,

China has entered into the most favourable international environment in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. China is no longer subject to a direct political or military threat from the outside world. However, this does not mean there are no longer any security threats. At the same time as some Western countries welcome and accept China into the international fold, old Cold War hegemonic ideology remains, leading to a defensive posture against a rapidly rising China. In this context, should China wish to fulfil its foreign policy goals, it needs to work diligently at improving relations with peripheral countries and strengthen its relations with African countries; using the collective strength of many to balance against the few... In a certain sense, Africa has always been the pivotal point for China in resisting external pressure" (Luo, 2011: 68-69) (Author's translation).

Luo's explicit analysis that African support is pivotal against Western hegemony is recognized by both Western and other Chinese scholars (Van Ness, 1970, 1993; Zhang, 2006). His point that China needs Africa in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century underlies the position that Africa remains an important alliance for the Chinese facing Western hegemony.

*Defence against accusation of (neo) colonialism*

By far the most popular topic for Chinese Africanists over the past five years is defending China against the Western charge (never African) of Chinese colonialism. Of the 202 articles published in Chinese on China-Africa relations in social science academic journals written between 1989 and 2010, a quarter of all these articles were on the subject of defending Chinese African engagement against the charge of neo-colonialism (see quantitative analysis in the next section). The following are representative:

Connecting China's Africa policy with colonialism is baseless imagination bordering on slander. China never had a colony in Africa and did not participate in any colonial activities, so where does the charge of 'neo-colonialism' come from? Due to similar historical experience, China has always shared the same perspective as Africa, doing all it can to assist African countries to develop their economy, protect their sovereignty and independence" (Pan, 2008: 19)(Author's translation).

"Many African countries are rich in resources; reasonable development of these resources is inevitable in capital accumulation and economic development. It is undeniable that Chinese firms compete fairly and abide by laws. What the West is really concerned with is that Western multinational corporations' long-term monopoly on African resources will be broken (Lu, 2010: 41) (Author's translation).

Articles published on China's political relations with Africa are striking in showing strong patriotic fervour and strong indignation at injustice done by the West to China. Despite the number of articles on the topic of Chinese colonialism, I was unable to find any articles reinforced by fieldwork research data or surveys of African opinions. No interviews with African diplomats, students or traders based in Beijing or elsewhere were conducted. Those who referred to African opinions referred to the opinions of African leaders reported in Chinese newspapers. Another shortcoming of Chinese articles defending China against the charge of neo-colonialism is that they are written in Chinese and therefore very unlikely to be read by their intended audience – Western critics.

*African democratisation*

A perennial and major debate that has occupied China's African studies community since the 1990s is that of African democratisation (Li, 2005: 69). According to Li, there are two schools of thought in China's African studies community on African democratisation – the 'positive school' and the 'negative school'. The negative school takes the view that conditions in many African countries are not ready for democracy; that industrialisation has not taken place; that education levels are low; and that there is no, or only a very small, middle class (Li, 2009). As such, democratisation cannot take root and would only lead to destabilisation. The positive school takes the view that democratisation is inevitable and that even though there are many factors that limit Africa's democratisation, Africa is in the process of finding its own model of democratisation (He, 2005: 4).

The Chinese debate on African democratisation, and democratisation as a source of insecurity, is central for this study, as it is on the matter of whether democratisation will lead to security that the liberal West and China differ most markedly. In his article assessing security challenges facing African security, Li of Peking University lists the "multiparty democratisation movement" [*duo dang minzhuhua yundong*] as one of the factors contributing to insecurity in Africa. He writes:

The movement for multiparty democracy has brought a major, complex and negative impact to Africa's national integration. It is also closely connected to national security. From the early 90s of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the wave of multiparty democratization washed over the African continent. Under American and Western pressure, the majority of one party authoritarian states were forced to reform. In a circumstance where the civil society is weak, and economic foundations fragile, they were forced to take the journey of democratization that the West took hundreds of years to complete (Li, 2006: 27)(Author's translation).

Within the "negative school" on African democratization, the viewpoints of Chinese authors are largely consistent with those who argue that the liberal peace is liberal hubris. Consistent with critics of the liberal peace, the majority view among Chinese Africanists is that imposing an election and a democratic governing structure does not automatically lead to peace and security. Li Baoping argues that:

due to insufficiencies of economic fundamentals and civil society, multiparty democracy is generally unsuitable, deformed and strained. The democracy built is merely a formality, most countries only have the shell but not the substance of a stable democratic government (Li, 2006: 28)(Author's translation).

Consistent with the PRC's own domestic position since Reform and Opening-up that economic development is foundational to everything a country does, the Chinese understanding of African insecurity is that many African countries lack solid economic foundations.

Zhang Hongmin of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences uses Marxist historical materialism as a framework to understand human societal progress along a linear scale. According to historical materialism, societies progress naturally from one mode of production to the next, and that the economic base of the society gives rise to the political, cultural and moral institutions of that society, constituting its superstructure. Consistent with Li Baoping's argument above, and referring explicitly to the Marxist perspective, Zhang argues that imposing the political institutions of an alien culture, as the West has done in colonial times and in its post-Cold War democratisation drives, has led to destabilisation (Zhang, 2007).

In comparison to the popular topic of defending China against the charges of colonialism, which is often polemical and poorly researched; Chinese studies of African democratisation are carried out by senior scholars and are more sophisticated. Generally, the findings of Chinese scholars are that democratisation, especially Western-imposed multiparty democracy, is a major cause of domestic insecurity. Interestingly, and perhaps not surprisingly, this viewpoint dovetails well with Beijing's official discourse against Western pressure on China to democratise, a discourse that argues that premature democratisation has failed and is at the core of state insecurity in Africa. The position that the imposition of democracy by the West is inappropriate liberal hubris and not different from colonial practice, was illustrated in an editorial of the *People's Daily* which used Kenya's 2008 post-election violence as an example of the unsuitability of Western-imposed multiparty democracy. The commentator notes that the post-election violence "is a

product of democracy bequeathed by Western hegemony; and a manifestation of values clashing when democracy is transplanted onto disagreeable land” (“Stability Comes First in a Country’s Development”, 2008).

In her assessment of the democratisation process in Kenya in her 2005 monograph: *feizhou guojia minzhuhua guocheng yanjiu* [The Study of African Countries Democratization Process], He concludes her case study of Kenya as follows:

The democratization process in Kenya illustrates that there is a positive correlation between a country’s reliance on Western aid and the process of its democratization. The more an African country is reliant on external Western aid, the more it is subject to the influence from Western countries in pushing democratization (He, 2005: 325) (Author’s translation).

Critical of Western-sponsored democratization in Africa in the immediate post-Cold War era, He identifies Western support for its favoured candidate as decisive and ultimately what drives multi-party democratic reform (He, 2005: 296-325).

In their critique of Western influence in African politics, Chinese academics raise concerns about the serious problems caused by neoliberal reforms, particularly in relation to their forced multi-party democratisation and structural adjustment programmes, a point also made by African and Western scholars (Herbst, 1990; . This imposition of democratic governing structures is neo-colonial in the sense that Western powers still hold overwhelming economic and structural power over African states. These critiques highlight the fact that African states are susceptible to Western interference because a high percentage of their budget is made up of Western aid. They point to key examples, such as the insecurity experienced in Kenya (as well as other states) because of forced democratisation in the first decade after the Cold-War.

#### *African Oil Security*

China began importing oil from Angola and Libya in 1992. Since then, Africa has become the second-largest oil exporting region to China after the Middle East, supplying over 30 percent of China’s oil (Zha, 2006). Increasing Chinese dependence on African oil means that civil wars and domestic insecurity in countries such as Libya have a direct impact on

China's oil supply. Zha Daojiong, an energy security specialist at Peking University, argues against using the traditional framework of China-Africa friendship when viewing China's oil energy security. On the question of Darfur, he argues that China needs to make a choice between bearing responsibility as a member of the UNSC and protecting its oil interests in the Sudan. He argues that the traditional framework of the win-win relationship and 'South-South cooperation' is inadequate for understanding China's security interests in Africa. This is because China's relations with other great powers need to be taken into account when considering Chinese strategies for securing African oil (Zha, 2006: 54). From an energy security perspective, Zha's article is unique in that it openly challenges the official positions of win-win and China-Africa friendship. Making a realist, balance-of-power argument, he argues that the need by China to have good relations with great powers is more important than its traditional support for the Sudan. (Zha, 2007: 67).

Energy security is central to Beijing's national security strategy. By implication, insecurity in African producers is becoming a national security issue, which was not the case a decade ago (Kang, 2007). It is interesting to note that Chinese Africanists do not make a connection between resources and corruption.<sup>12</sup> That oil wealth very often does not improve government efficiency, but exacerbates corruption, is noted by Kang, a researcher on energy security. In his article, Kang points out that China's oil investments are focused on unstable African countries and that better risk-assessment needs to be conducted. He also points out that there is a great deal of shortage in expertise amongst the Chinese on African politics, especially energy security, and that in the future, emphasis need to be placed on gathering information, and analysing and managing risk. (Kang, 2007).

### *United Nations Peacekeeping Operations*

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<sup>12</sup> Chinese Africanists are very reluctant to refer to the resource curse as a potential explanation for African instability. I have not been able to find any explicit reference to the resource curse as a potential source of African instability and underdevelopment. However, non-Africanists such as Kang do make this reference. It may be the case that given the rapidly rising Chinese engagement in resource exploration in Africa, Chinese Africanists do not wish to implicate Chinese raw material engagements as a part of the cause of African instability.

The most comprehensive study of the evolving Chinese peacebuilding policy to date is by a Chinese scholar, He Yin. He is an associate professor at the China Peacekeeping Training Centre and his study is published in English, in the form of a working paper by the Institute for Security and Development Policy in Sweden (see chapter two, He, 2007).

UNPKOs, and specifically the evolution of UNPKOs from the traditional model of peace observation to the non-traditional role of peacemaking, are a very popular topic of discussion in Chinese publications. In a 2001 paper published in the *Journal of the University of International Relations* (Beijing), Chen discusses the development of UNPKOs in the post-Cold War era, during which UNPKOs have moved from peace “keeping” to peace “making” (Chen, 2001). Chen argues that the international community has too high an expectation of UNPKOs and that this high expectation is used by “some great powers” to intervene “under the flag of UN”. Chen describes UNPKOs as undergoing an “identity crisis” [*dingwei weiji*] (Cheng, 2001: 20).

In a 2005 article on challenges facing UNPKOs, Lu Jianxin writes that the UNPKO is a tool of US domination. Lu comments on the unilateralism of the US and asserts that the UNSC has been used by the US for hegemonic domination and narrow national interests (Lu, 2005). In his 2007 article “*weiheping erlai – jixi zonguo canyufeizhou wehe xingdong*” [“Come for Peace” –analysis of China’s Peacekeeping Operations in Africa], Zhou Lei of the Central Party School made explicit reference to Fravel’s 1996 article on Chinese attitudes against non-traditional, second generation UNPKOs. Zhou writes that,

In reality, with deeper practical experience in UNPKOs, China has begun the dialectics [*bianzheng*] on the principle of sovereignty and principle of ethics. The principle of non-interference in domestic affairs remains the principle; however, during an emergency if there is a proactive request, responding with peacekeepers is also a way to guard international ethics [*guoji daoyi*] (Zhou, 2007: 31)(Author’s translation).

Zhou’s article examines the conditions of, and Chinese interests in, Chinese participation in UNPKOs in Africa. Of the conditions favourable for further Chinese participation, he notes that China has excellent diplomatic relations with African nations and has a good

reputation in Africa. Zhou notes too that Western nations are becoming more reluctant to send peacekeepers due to the Somalia debacle in the early 1990s, as well as Western states being driven solely by self-interest. Finally, Zhou observes that many African conflicts are religious, occurring between Christians and Muslims, and that the Confucian tradition offers a “rich resource” for conflict resolution (Zhou, 2007: 34). Regarding China’s interest in participating in African UNPKOs, Zhou notes that it firstly demonstrates China’s determination and ability to bear ‘great power responsibility’ [*daguo zeren*]; secondly, that Chinese participation in UNPKOs contributes to Chinese soft-power [*ruan shili*]; and, thirdly, that Chinese participation in UNPKOs offers a forceful rebuttal to the China Threat Theory (Zhou, 2007: 34).

The contrast in position between Chen’s 2001 article that continued to see UNPKOs as an instrument of US imperialism and Zhou’s 2007 article clearly reflects China’s evolving and normalizing stance in UNPKOs (see chapter five).

Examining published Chinese academic articles between 2001 and 2007, one can see a marked shift in attitude towards UNPKOs, reflecting a rising confidence on the part of Chinese academics regarding the respect China and Chinese UNPKOs command in Africa. Shifting from the traditional critique that UNPKOs are an excuse for great powers to interfere with domestic affairs, and that the UNSC is helpless in the face of US unilateralism, Chinese commentators have begun to take ownership of UNPKOs. Confident of China’s rising status in Africa, as a result of many decades of good Sino-Africa relations and declining West-Africa relations, Chinese commentators appear confident in China’s participation in UNPKOs. They also note the importance participation in UNPKOs can be in projecting a favourable Chinese image.

## **THE CHINESE UNDERSTANDING OF AFRICA: AN ASSESSMENT OF AFRICAN STUDIES IN CHINA**

Passing judgement on China’s African Studies community, Li Anshan, a Peking University Africanist writes that,

most of the books written by Chinese scholars are based on secondary materials from English sources. Few scholars have been to Africa to teach or conduct research.



Not a single anthropologist has been to Africa specifically for study... there is also no African language study in China except for training purposes. And there are very few exchanges between China and the rest of the world (Li, 2005a: 73-74).

Made in 2005, Li's comments on the state of Chinese African Studies still largely hold true in 2011; Chinese capacity for African Studies remains weak (Taylor, 2009: 5). A Chinese International Relations academic in Beijing laments that there are no good Chinese African experts; that there is little funding for African Studies in China; and that the few Africanists working in China are little more than policy advisers.<sup>13</sup> However, progress and cooperation is being made and exchanges between Chinese and Western scholars are becoming more frequent.<sup>14</sup> Younger Chinese Africanists are beginning to conduct fieldwork-based research and to publish their research in working papers in English (Li, 2010; Wang, 2011). Joint publications between Western academics and Chinese scholars are also beginning to appear (Taylor and Xiao, 2009; Wu and Taylor, 2011). Chinese African Studies institutions are publishing collections of essays by Chinese scholars on Sino-Africa relations in English (Liu and Yang, 2009). Not only are Chinese Africanists reaching out, Western and African academics are teaching in, conducting research on, and studying in, China. Young African and Western students are taking Masters degrees jointly set up by Chinese- and UK-based universities and are conducting research on China-Africa ties in English (Bluen, 2011; Brenner, 2011; Cucchiaro, 2011).

#### *Funding and Positions for Research within China*

Reflecting the rising importance of Africa and the need for information about Africa, many new departments, institutions and university-based think-tanks focusing on African Studies have been set up during the past few years in China. This is in addition to the traditional bases of African Studies in China established during the Mao era, namely: the

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<sup>13</sup> Interview with Chinese International Relations academic, Beijing, July 16, 2010.

<sup>14</sup> The author served as a visiting academic at the Center for African Studies, Zhejiang Normal University, Jinhua, Zhejiang Province, from May to September 2010. From September to December 2010, the author was a visiting academic at the School of International Studies, Renmin University, Beijing. This section is based on the author's discussions and interviews with academics and policy makers in Jinhua, Shanghai and Beijing.

Institute of West Asian and African Studies at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, the Centre for African Studies at Peking University, the Centre for African Studies at Yunnan University, and the Centre for African Law studies at Xiangtan University.

At the moment, the largest institute of African studies, established in 2006, is the Institute of African Studies based at Zhejiang Normal University in Jinhua, Zhejiang province, with 25 full time personnel.<sup>15</sup> New institutes being set up or in the process of being set up are as follows:

- a. Centre of African Studies, Shanghai Normal University.<sup>16</sup>
- b. Institute of African Studies, East China Normal University.<sup>17</sup>
- c. Centre of African Studies, China Foreign Affairs University.<sup>18</sup>
- d. China-Africa Centre, at Chinese Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation, Ministry of Commerce, People's Republic of China.<sup>19</sup>
- e. Centre for Western Asia and Africa Studies, Shanghai Institute of International Studies.<sup>20</sup>
- f. Centre for Western Asia and Africa Studies, China Institute of Contemporary International Relations.<sup>21</sup>
- g. Centre for African Studies, Xiamen University.<sup>22</sup>

The large number of emerging institutions of African studies reflects the recognition by central and provincial governments of the importance of Africa. However, the small number of existing Africanists in China means many of the institutions are staffed by scholars who have not been trained in African studies.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> <http://ias.zjnu.cn/en/staff.php> (accessed July 26, 2011)

<sup>16</sup> . <http://renwen.shnu.edu.cn/Default.aspx?tabid=6903andlanguage=zh-CN> (accessed July 15, 2011)

<sup>17</sup> [http://xiaoban.ecnu.edu.cn/Frontsite/bulletinDetail.asp?b\\_id=312](http://xiaoban.ecnu.edu.cn/Frontsite/bulletinDetail.asp?b_id=312) (accessed July 15, 2011)

<sup>18</sup> <http://fzzx.cfau.edu.cn/> (accessed July 15, 2011)

<sup>19</sup> [http://www.caitec.org.cn/c/cn/news/2010-08/30/news\\_2194.html](http://www.caitec.org.cn/c/cn/news/2010-08/30/news_2194.html) (accessed July 15, 2011)

<sup>20</sup> [http://www.sjis.org.cn/Lingyu\\_View.aspx?lid=53](http://www.sjis.org.cn/Lingyu_View.aspx?lid=53) (accessed July 15, 2011)

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.cicir.ac.cn/chinese/organView.aspx?cid=201> (accessed July 15, 2011)

<sup>22</sup> <http://gk.xmu.edu.cn/s/10/t/32/a/509/info.jspx> (accessed 15 July, 2011)

<sup>23</sup> Email correspondence with a Chinese Africanist at the Institute of African Studies, Zhejiang Normal University, 6 July 2011.

### *Context in Which Research Takes Place*

The nature of African Studies and Sino-Africa relations in China today is shaped by the context of the gradual liberalisation and opening-up of Chinese society. While China is far freer today compared to a decade ago, foreign policy remains a 'sensitive' topic. Universities and research institutes in China are state institutions managed and funded by the Ministry of Education. As state employees, Chinese Africanists do not enjoy the academic freedom that Western scholars do, and their research is generally conducted in the service of the state. However, as China increasingly opens up, Chinese scholars have begun to access international research funding and enter into joint research projects with Western partners. This has resulted in their research being less defensive of the official Chinese position (He, 2007; Li, 2010).

Chinese academic publications are different from Western academic publications in fundamental ways. Open criticism and debate about current government policy remain taboo. Criticism, when it does appear, is couched in the form of policy suggestions and proposals at the conclusion of the article. Generally, Chinese African Studies literature is characterised by rhetorical support of state policy and patriotic defence against Western criticisms.

### *Volume and Presentation of Research Output*

The Chinese National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI) is a state-funded database and is the largest and most comprehensive knowledge database in China. The database contains master's and doctoral theses, conference proceedings, technical and professional publications, as well as newspapers and journal articles. The database was set up as a part of the Key Publishing Project of the National Eleventh Five-Year Plan and holds 47 million Chinese academic articles.<sup>24</sup> A shortcoming of this database is that the categories and keywords are not standardised, formalised or enforced. For example, articles defending the charge of China colonising Africa are categorised under either *xin zhimin zhuyi* [neo-colonialism] or *zhimin zhuyi* [colonialism]. The lack of standardised and enforced

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<sup>24</sup> China Knowledge Resource Integrated Database, <http://eng.cnki.net/grid2008/index.htm> (accessed July 5, 2011)

categories means that it is difficult to provide a definitive quantitative survey of articles according to their subjects.

Entering the following Chinese keywords and combination of keywords into the database on June 30, 2011, prescribing the time period between 1989 and 2010, and limiting the search to academic journal articles in the humanities and social sciences, provided the following results:

- a. '*zongfei guanxi*' [Sino-Africa Relations]: 202
- b. '*xin zhimin zhuyi*'; '*zhongfei guanxi*' [neo-colonialism; China-Africa relations]: 50
- c. '*zhimin zhuyi*'; '*zhongfei guanxi*' [colonialism; China-Africa relations]: 12
- d. '*feizhou anquan*' [African security]: 6
- e. '*shiyou liyi*'; '*feizhou*' [oil interest; Africa]: 4
- f. '*zhongguo de feizhou yanjiu*' [China's African Studies]: 1

This subject keyword(s) survey provides a first attempt at quantitative estimation of the research output and research focus of China's Africa policy epistemic community. There is a great deal of generalist literature of dubious scholarship on China-Africa relations; this literature professes unanimous agreement that China is Africa's all-weather friend.<sup>25</sup> The vast majority of articles classified under 'Sino-Africa relations' refer to the same sources and repeat the same themes of China-Africa friendship and provide no critical assessment of the China-Africa relationship. The relatively fewer issue-focused articles, often with a 'policy advice' subsection, are usually more valuable for the researcher. The policy advice that normally constitutes the final section of the article provides guarded critique of current policy and suggests policy improvements. For example in "*zhongguo canyu feizhou de anquan hezuo ji zi fanzhan qushi*" [Chinese Participation in African Security Cooperation and its Tendencies], the author writes:

China lacks international experience. There is a lack of research and a lack of policy clarity on whether China should participate more fully in international security

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<sup>25</sup> No open dissent or debate on China's all-weather friendship with Africa would have been allowed to be published.

cooperation and how to engage in such participation. Therefore, China should prepare itself by research into both the effects on public opinion as well as a strategic approach so that China's foreign policy can better dovetail with its African security cooperation (Xu, 2010).

In his 2006 article, *zhongguo zai feizhou de shiyou liyi: guoji zhegzhhi de keti* [China's Oil Interest in Africa: the Case of International Politics], Zha, an energy specialist, is critical of Beijing's discourse of South-South alliance. Regarding China's oil interests in Sudan, Zha argues that vetoing, or abstaining from, UNSC condemnations of the Sudan may protect China's immediate oil interests there, but has other costs:

... in the post-Cold War era, oil security is central to US African policy. There is a degree of conflict between the US and China in securing oil. In the process of international politics, it is not important whether US criticism of China [on the Sudan issue] is fair or reasonable, what is important is that this criticism will add to the cost of China building up its soft power (Zha, 2006) (Author's translation).

The increasing interaction and engagements between China and Africa in different spheres mean that research on Chinese security relations with Africa is no longer the exclusive domain of Africa area specialists. Academics in oil security, international law, trade and overseas investment, as well as other specialisations, are commenting on different aspects of Sino-African relations as Chinese engagements in Africa increase. A Beijing academic agreed with the author's assertion that there was a great deal of repetition and a general lack of critique and debate in China's African Studies epistemic community; China's *guoqing* [condition of state] was offered as the reason for this situation.<sup>26</sup> Assessing the state of Chinese African Studies, another Africanist observed:

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<sup>26</sup> Interview with Chinese academic, Beijing, July 20, 2010.

The stagnation of domestic (Chinese) research on African politics is not unrelated to the lack of progress in research methodology and rigidity in research perspective (Zhang, 2007)(Author's translation).

There is a great deal of activity at the moment by the Chinese government and universities to increase the capacity for, and improve the quality of, African research, as can be seen by the pace at which new research centres are been set up. It is becoming more common for graduate students working on African issues to visit Africa and for African and Western academics to teach at Chinese institutions. There are also open and frequent encouragements by China's diplomatic community to academics to raise critical voices.<sup>27</sup> Given that very few scholars have had the opportunity of extended experience of living and working in Africa, a great deal of knowledge on Africa comes from 'official' sources, in the form of newspaper and magazine reports written by Chinese journalists and diplomats. Without having primary data, and relying instead on secondary sources, academic debates tend to be literature-based, repetitive and focused on Chinese policy towards Africa.

## **THE FRAMEWORKS OF BEIJING'S ANALYSIS OF AFRICAN SECURITY**

How does Beijing negotiate the myriad of contradicting internal and external demands on it to participate or abstain from interfering in African domestic affairs? How important is Africa in terms of China's *own* security? And how does Beijing understand the causes of African conflicts? Three theoretical frameworks that are used by the Chinese-African security epistemic community in discussing and analysing African security can be identified. They are: realism, Marxist historical materialism, and post-colonialism.

### *Realism*

Chinese policy makers and IR scholars overwhelmingly view world politics through a realist lens. In terms of a priority list of importance, Africa as a region is not a priority in Beijing's security concerns. Jing Canrong of Renmin University lists Beijing's security priorities in terms of geographical regions as follows: 1) Great powers: the US is the most

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<sup>27</sup> During my stay at the Institute of African Studies, this point was raised many times by visiting Chinese diplomats who were posted in Africa in 2010.

important, followed by Russia, Japan, France and Britain; 2) Neighbouring countries: the two Koreas, Vietnam and other South East Asian countries, India, as well as central Asian states; 3) Africa; 4) Latin America. Latin America is at the bottom of the priority list for Beijing because of its traditional status as the backyard of the US.<sup>28</sup>

In terms of China-Africa relations, there has been a shifting dynamic in their relative importance for one another. As China has risen, its importance for Africa as a trading partner and political ally has grown greatly; however, as can be seen in the priority list, Africa's relative importance for China has not shifted in relation to other regions.

While Africa does not rank highly for Beijing in terms of its political and security implications, its instrumental value as a part of Third World solidarity is crucial. From a realist perspective, Beijing's focus for the foreseeable future will remain on the US and the Asia-Pacific region. The importance of Africa lies in its instrumental value in counterbalancing the West. However, as Chinese investment in Africa increases, China's direct exposure to African insecurity is also increasing. The PLA Navy's participation in an anti-piracy mission in the Gulf of Aden and the evacuation of Chinese workers in Libya both testify to this (*BBC News*, December 26, 2008; *People's Daily Online*, February 24, 2011).

### *Marxist historical materialism*

Explicitly and implicitly, Beijing's African Studies epistemic community examines African politics via a Marxist historical materialism framework of analysis. Historical materialism is a materialistic, linear and deterministic theoretical framework. Briefly, it posits that societies progress naturally from one mode of production to the next. The society's economic model of production gives rise to the political, cultural and moral institutions of that society, constituting its superstructure. From a historical materialist perspective, imposing political institutions from the outside, as the West did in colonial times and is currently doing through the liberal peace project, will not lead to peace and security. This is because the given society's mode of production does not support the artificially imposed superstructure. Regarding factors that lead to African insecurity, Luo Jianbo writes:

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<sup>28</sup> Interview with Jing Canrong, Deputy Dean, School of International Studies, Renmin University, July 10, 2010.

External forces' interference in domestic policies and inter-state conflicts in and between African countries are the direct causes of various intractable political and security problems. A direct security threat also comes from Western colonialists' reprehensible acts of frustrating the independent movement of African peoples (Luo, 2005: 35)(Author's translation).

Luo's comment conforms to official Chinese discourse against the imposition of Western democracy. This discourse is normally employed against Western criticisms of China's human rights record and lack of democratic reform; however, it is equally useful in its analysis of African insecurity.

#### *Post-colonial: Third World critique*

From Beijing's viewpoint, Sino-Africa relations were founded on an anti-colonial, anti-imperial and anti-revisionist alliance in the Mao era (Li, 2006a: 12). Since the end of the Cold War, Beijing has replaced Third World alliance with South-South cooperation. In the official white paper *China's Africa Policy*, Beijing describes China as "the largest developing country" and Africa as the continent that "encompasses the largest number of developing countries" (*China's Africa Policy*, 2006). While polemic against US imperialism and Soviet revisionism is no longer to be found in official Chinese discourse, Beijing's self-identification as a natural leader of developing countries in an 'anti-hegemonic' alliance can still be traced. From a post-colonial perspective, Beijing is anti-interventionist and views the Western penchant for interference and regime change with suspicion. Li of Peking University is unequivocal when he writes that "external interference cannot fundamentally solve Africa's security problem" (Li, 2006: 27). The consensus in Chinese-African studies academia on African peace and security is that intractable tribal conflicts, a legacy of colonialism and continued neo-colonial interference, form the major obstacles to national building and peace in Africa (Li, 2006a: 70; Zhang, 2007: 40-41). In essence, Beijing's view on African stability is consistent with its view on its own domestic security, namely that a strong state is needed to enforce peace.

When questioned about deeper engagements with liberal peace projects through UN agencies and Western NGOs, Beijing diplomats cite a lack of experience in terms of



language and managerial capacity.<sup>29</sup> However, regarding further engagement in UNPKOs, Beijing has announced that it will consider sending combat troops if the UN formally requests it (“Chinese Combat Troops ‘Can Join UN Peacekeeping’”, 2010).

## **CONCLUSION: WHAT IS THE CHINESE APPROACH TO PEACEBUILDING?**

The Chinese perspective on development and peace in Africa is that social stability follows naturally from economic development and poverty alleviation.<sup>30</sup> As has been shown, this is the official Chinese position and is widely held by Chinese Africanists. This is unsurprising given that this is also the tried, tested and very successful formula for China’s current emergence. The central difference between the liberal peace and the Chinese approach to peacebuilding is the principle of non-interference in domestic affairs. China professes that it does not wish to interfere in the domestic politics of other countries and that it cares only for commercial relations. According to this position, the domestic politics of a country are too complex for outside powers to understand and it is unwise to interfere in them. However, when there is economic development, and with it employment and poverty alleviation, peace will naturally follow.

In the context of the liberal peace, the official Chinese, as well as scholarly, consensus is that the liberal peace is liberal hubris and has directly led to instability in African countries such as Kenya. From this standpoint, no external imposition of economic or political models can be expected to work. In his analysis of the difference between the ‘Washington Consensus’ and the ‘Beijing Consensus’, Luo Jianbo points out that the “Washington Consensus and the structural adjustment programs are theoretically sophisticated but marked by series of failures in practice” (2009: 31)(Author’s translation). Luo argues that, instead of proposing a Chinese model, the Chinese government would rather speak about a “developmental model” [*fazhan moshi*] that is characterized by trial and error and pragmatism (Luo, 2009: 31-32). In other words, a developmental model that emphasises gradual and progressive market reforms in accordance with Deng Xiaoping’s injunction to ‘cross the river by feeling the stones’. Instead of the “shock therapy” prescribed by the Washington Consensus, the Chinese developmental model emphasises

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<sup>29</sup> Interview with Zhou Yuxiao, Chinese Ambassador to Liberia, Monrovia, November 20, 2009.

<sup>30</sup> Interview with Chinese Africanist, Beijing, July 20, 2010.

paying due regard to local conditions and making careful “progressive reforms” [*jianjin xing gaige*] (Luo, 2009: 32).

In essence, the Asian developmental model is foundational to Beijing’s understanding of peace and security both for the Chinese economy and, as far as it is practicable, for Africa.

However, is this understanding a good “fit” for Africa? In the next two chapters, the problems faced by the liberal peace in Liberia will be assessed followed by an assessment of the Chinese practice of peacebuilding in Liberia.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN: WHAT FIT FOR THE LIBERAL PEACE IN LIBERIA?**

The civil war in Liberia ravaged the country between 1989 and 2003, with an interlude between 1997 and 2000, during which Charles Taylor was the elected president. Over the past decade, a good deal of scholarship has been published analysing and accounting for the war in Liberia (Aboagye and Bah, 2005; Adebajo, 2002a; Adebajo, 2002b; Ellis, 1999; Ero, 2009; Mgbeoji, 2003; Moran, 2006; Reno, 1989; Zounmenou, 2008). Given the close participation by neighbouring countries, who supported rebel incursions into Liberia, and the intervention of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) under Nigerian leadership, the conflict was complex and protracted. The United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), a comprehensive peacebuilding operation, was established in 2003 and continues to sustain a fragile peace. The PRC has been actively engaged with Liberia. It contributes soldiers and medical personnel to the multilateral UNMIL, as well as bilaterally through aid projects and investments.

This chapter takes a critical look at the liberal peace through UNMIL. It draws on studies on African politics and specifically literature on neopatrimonialism (Berman, 1998; Bratton and van de Walle 1994; Reno 1995, 1998; Taylor and Williams, 2008; Van de Walle, 2001). It also draws on literature critical of the liberal peace (Newman, Paris and Richmond, 2009; Richmond, 2005; Richmond and Franks, 2007) as well as the 'misfit' of the liberal peace in Africa and elsewhere (Higate and Henry, 2009; Taylor, 2007a). The chapter aims to answer the question: what fit for the liberal peace in Liberia? It is in the context of the problems faced by the liberal peace in Liberia that in the emerging Chinese approach to peacebuilding can be properly presented and assessed.

The chapter is arranged as follows. First, a descriptive account of the civil war in Liberia will be presented; this is followed by an account of the regional (ECOWAS) and international (UNSC) effort at establishing peace through the UNMIL in the country. Secondly, explanatory accounts on Liberia's civil war will be surveyed with neopatrimonialism presented as the theoretical framework that provides the most cogent explanation for Liberia's descend into chaos. Thirdly, literature critical of the liberal peace will be presented to provide an assessment of UNMIL's work in Liberia. Finally, a critical assessment of the liberal peace in Liberia, where a one-size-fit-all solution imposed with

little consideration for the existing neopatrimonial political reality in Liberia will be presented.

## **THE CIVIL WAR IN LIBERIA**

Liberia was established as a state by the American Colonisation Society in the early 1900s, as a place to settle the recently emancipated black slaves of the US (Conteh, 1999). While the reason for settlement was ostensibly to allow the freed slaves to return to Africa, the primary motive was to repatriate freed Africans who were considered undesirable in the US (Moran, 2006). Slave owners saw repatriation as a means to remove independent freed slaves from the view of their slaves. Others, while against slavery, felt uncomfortable living in a multiracial society (Moran, 2006: 2). Between 1822 and 1867, between 12–13 000 colonists were settled (Liebenow, 1987: 19). Approximately 4 500 of these were free-born blacks, 6000 were impounded slaves from captured slave ships, and others were emancipated on the condition that they ‘returned’ to Africa (Moran, 2006: 2). The Americo-Liberians, or ‘Congoes’ or ‘settlers’, as they were known, established themselves as the ruling elites in Monrovia, the capital they named after US president James Monroe. They declared independence and established the first republic in Africa on July 26, 1847. The remainder of Liberia’s population are affiliated with one or more of the 16 indigenous ethno-linguistic groups (Moran, 2004). Landing on the west coast of Africa, the former slaves regarded and treated the ‘natives’ as uncivilised savages – no different from other colonisers in Africa. Tension and distrust between the settlers and natives were always present and social structures were not unlike those in other colonies in Africa. Commenting on the colonial relationship between the Americo-Liberians and the natives, Adebajo writes:

Like European settlers in the United States who had stripped black Africans of their freedom and disposed Native Americans of their land, it can be said that the Americo-Liberian settlers had learned similar lessons with brutal efficiency (2002a: 21).

In 1870, the True Whig party was established and ruled Liberia for the next 110 years. Under its rule, the small elite dominated every aspect of political and economic life for its own benefit (Boas, 2001). In 1931, the regime was reprimanded by the League of Nations for complicity in forcing indigenous Liberians to plantations in the Spanish colony of Fernando Po (Equatorial Guinea), where the Americo-Liberians acquired land cheaply and demanded taxes and rent as plantation owners (Adebajo, 2002a: 21). Governed by both institutional rule with a constitution as well as being a patrimonial regime dominated by Americo-Liberians, the Liberian state was “a façade of what it pretended to be: it was able to extract resources (in fact, very able) and distribute them... Politics within the settler oligarchy were extremely corrupt, and incumbent presidents used every resource available to stay in power” (Boas, 2001: 703).

The oligarchic rule of the Americo-Liberians, themselves constituting approximately five percent of the population, allowed them to enjoy the benefit of the state to the exclusion of the indigenous population. 133 years of this self-interested neopatrimonial rule created deep resentments among the indigenous people, resentments that reforms by President William Tubman (1944-1971) and President William Tolbert (1971-1980) could not heal. Reforms carried out by Tubman attempted to broaden the political participation of the indigenous people. Citizenship was granted and representation in the legislature was extended to them. Reforms were continued by Tolbert. In the twenty years between 1960 and 1980, primary school enrolment increased from 31 to 60 percent of the population, and secondary school enrolment increased from two to 20 percent (Adebajo, 2002a: 22). However, discrimination against the indigenous population persisted in the civil service and political system. Despite reforms, by 1980 the Americo-Liberians still owned 60 percent of the country's wealth (Liebenow, 1987: 170). Sharp societal divides were the primary grievance of the majority of Liberians and the Progressive Alliance of Liberians (PAL) was founded in 1975 to agitate for reforms (Adebajo, 2002a: 22).

The 1970s oil crisis hit Liberia especially hard. Prices on the world market for the two primary exports of Liberia – iron ore and rubber – plummeted. In Liberia, 1979 became known as the Year of Ferment. In April 1979, Tolbert proposed a price increase in rice, the staple food in Liberia, from US\$ 22 to US\$33 per bag. This triggered a mass demonstration that turned into the violent Rice Riot on April 14, 1979 (Ellis, 1999: 50).

The PAL organised a mass demonstration involving over 2000 people. Police fired at the crowd, resulting in rioting and the death of more than 40 students. Unable to quell the discontent, Tolbert invoked a mutual defence pact signed in January of 1979 with neighbouring Guinea and 700 Guinean soldiers were sent to Monrovia to restore order there. The Rice Riot; the need for foreign troops to restore order; and the series of successful demonstrations organised by the PAL considerably weakened President Tolbert's hold on power (Adebajo, 2002a: 23).

It was in the context of economic meltdown, political upheaval and the long standing grievances against Americo-Liberian oppression that Master-Sergeant Samuel Kanyon Doe staged a successful and violent coup against the Tolbert administration.

### *The Civil War*

Samuel Doe, an uncommissioned army officer, along with his friend Thomas Quiwonkpa and fifteen fellow soldiers, attacked the Executive Mansion in Monrovia on the morning of April 12, 1980. Doe and his entourage killed President Tolbert, along with 26 other occupants of the Mansion (Ellis, 1999: 54). Within ten days of successfully carrying out his coup, Doe executed 13 True Whig Party officials for corruption. After the coup, the People's Redemption Council (PRC) was established, with Doe as the head of state and Quiwonkpa as the commanding general of the army. The "spontaneous jubilation" of non-Americo-Liberians following the coup testified to the deep resentment the majority of Liberians had towards Tolbert and the oligarchic ruling class he represented (Adebajo, 2002b: 45).

The PRC rule, however, was full of in-fighting. Charles Taylor, related to Quiwonkpa by marriage, was able to use this connection to work at the government procurement office (Ellis, 1999: 57). Taylor's efficiency at procuring new cars for the new ruling junta and his refurbishing of Tubman's old stretched limousine for Doe's use meant he became a favourite with Doe and became a powerful behind the scenes power-broker, able to attend ministerial meetings and sessions of the National Security Council (Ellis, 1999: 57).

Eager to legitimate his rule, in 1983 Doe pushed through constitutional changes to pave the way for a general election, so that he could be legitimated as a civilian president. A committee headed by Amos Sawyer was set up to draft a new constitution for Liberia. A draft constitution was submitted on April 11, 1983 and approved by popular referendum in

July 1994. Doe's sense of insecurity in the Executive Mansion meant that Taylor and Quiwonkpa soon fell out of favour. In 1983, Taylor went into exile in the US. Upon being informed that he would be transferred from the commandership of the army, Quiwonkpa also fled into exile to the US (Ellis, 1999: 58).

Despite ample campaign finances, Doe could not win the election without resorting to electoral fraud. The rightful winner of the 1985 election was Jackson F. Doe (no relation) of the Liberia Action Party, from Nimba County. In order to remain in power, Samuel Doe fired the count officials; had his own electoral officials installed; and had himself declared the winner, with a 50.9 percent majority (Adebajo, 2002a: 29; Ellis, 1999: 59). In November 1985, Quiwonkpa, also a native of Nimba County, returned to Monrovia from across the Sierra Leonean border. His counter-coup was ostensibly to install Jackson Doe – the rightful winner of the 1985 election. The attempted coup failed and he was “beaten to death, castrated, and dismembered” (Adebajo, 2002: 29).

Under Samuel Doe, the Liberian economy quickly spiralled downwards. Exiles from Liberia gathered in the neighbouring states of Burkina Faso and Cote d'Ivoire. Disillusionment with the heavy-handed Doe regime meant that returning exiles, such as Taylor and Prince Johnson, were able to raise rebel forces with the support of different tribes, many of whom had suffered under Doe's oppression. Through Burkina Faso, Taylor was able to secure the support of Muammar Gaddafi, who was himself pursuing a vast revolutionary project (Ellis, 1999: 69). With Libyan backing, Taylor was able to re-establish the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) and march into Nimba County from Cote d'Ivoire on Christmas Eve, 1989 (Adebajo, 2002: 42; Ellis, 1999: 75). As Taylor invaded, another force, under the leadership of Johnson, also entered the fight in Nimba County. Mayhem broke out and the country descended into war. By August 1990, the possibility of a US intervention disappeared as Iraq invaded Kuwait and the attention of the world shifted to the Middle East.

On August 7, 1990, ECOWAS agreed to form a peace enforcement force to intervene in Liberia's civil war through the Economic Community Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) (Ellis, 1999: 86). The ECOMOG force landed in Monrovia on August 24, without having established a ceasefire or the consent of the belligerent parties (Adebajo, 2002a:75: 79; Gberie, 2005: 56). One of the warring factions, the Independent National Patriotic Front

(INPFL), led by Johnson, welcomed ECOMOG and allowed the force to establish a base at the Freeport, which was under his control. On September 10, 1990, Doe visited the ECOMOG headquarters at the Freeport of Monrovia, in his capacity as the president of Liberia. Just 24 hours later, Doe was tortured and murdered by Johnson. The home video made of the torture was widely distributed (Adebajo, 2002a: 78).

On September 29, under the direction of a new Nigerian general, General Dogonyaro, ECOMOG carried out an assault on Taylor's NPFL forces and flushed NPFL soldiers from central Monrovia. A stalemate ensued, during which Taylor ran a parallel government of 'Greater Liberia' and conducted business as the leader of the rest of Liberia, while ECOMOG supported an interim government of national unity (IGNU), with Sawyer as president, in Monrovia (Ellis, 1999: 97-98). Between 1990 and 1995, a series of peace accords between Taylor and the IGNU were signed – all of which were broken. The stalemate was finally broken in August 1995, when two key players, Charles Taylor and President Abacha of Nigeria, together with other participants, reached an agreement in Abuja. The Abuja Agreement provided for a new Council of State, in which the major factions would be represented, and elections were scheduled for August 1996. This agreement facilitated Taylor's return to Monrovia and his participation in national politics. Delayed due to more fighting, the election was eventually held on July 19, 1997, and Taylor duly won, with over three-quarters of the vote (Gberie, 2005: 61).

The transition from war to peace under Taylor's presidency was a failure. In 2001 the country again descended into civil war. Anti-Taylor factions regrouped under the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD). LURD received support from Guinea, and another faction, the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL), received support from Cote d'Ivoire (Gberie, 2005: 62-63). The rebel groups raided government positions and besieged Monrovia between July 18 and August 14, 2003. Over 1000 civilians died from shelling of the city. Defeated, Taylor resigned ahead of the Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement, and went into exile in Nigeria (Gberie, 2005).

### *United Nations in Liberia*

The Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed between the Government of Liberia, LURD and MODEL on August 18, 2003 called for the "deployment of an International Stabilisation



Force (ISF) in Liberia” (Aboagye and Bah, 2004). In response, the UNSC adapted Resolution 1497 (2003) authorising ECOWAS to: “[e]stablish a Multinational Force in Liberia to support the implementation of the June 17, 2003 ceasefire agreement” (UNSC Resolution 1497 (2003)). The mission of the ECOWAS Mission in Liberia (ECOMIL) was to:

- 1) establish zones of separation,
- 2) secure the ceasefire line and,
- 3) create conditions for the deployment of the ISF (Aboagye and Bah, 2004:5)

In contrast to earlier ECOWAS deployments, ECOMIL had a clear division of labour between ECOWAS, the UN and other international actors; a clear mandate; and an exit strategy. The agreement between the UN and ECOWAS was that the sub-region would continue to lead the peacekeeping in Liberia, with the UN playing a supportive role (Ero, 2009: 287).

The current UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) was established by Security Council Resolution 1509 (2003), adapted unanimously on September 11, 2003. The major role of peace enforcement has always been played by the regional entity of ECOWAS. It was mandated under Chapter VII of the Charter of the UN and was charged to support and to protect Liberian civilians. It mandated sending a force of up to 15 000 strong force in a stabilisation force consisting of 250 military observers, 160 staff officers and 1 115 civilian police officers (UNSC Resolution 1509 (2003)). Established to support the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), UNMIL was mandated to:

- support the implementation of the Cease Fire Agreement
- support humanitarian and human rights assistance
- provide support for security sector reform.

In order to accomplish this mandate, UNMIL identified eight implementation goals, namely:

- peace and security;
- disarmament and demobilisation;
- rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-combatants;
- establishing the rule of law, including judiciary and corrections;
- restoring state authority;
- establishing safeguards for human rights;
- provision of factual information through public media campaigns;
- co-ordination of UN agencies for humanitarian assistance (Aboagye and Bah, 2004: 6; UN Resolution 1509 (2003)).

The original UNMIL mandate was to expire in September 2010. At the time of writing, UNMIL had completed the third stage of its withdrawal between October 2009 and May 2010, reducing the number of troops from 15 250 to 8 102 (*Security Council Report: Liberia*, September 2010). Complete UNMIL drawdown, however, has been postponed twice (in September 2010 and September 2011). In his report on UNMIL, the Secretary-General noted that;

the overall security situation in the country remained generally stable, but fragile. Ethnic and communal tensions, disputes over access to land and resources, and a general lack of confidence in the criminal justice system continued to affect security”(*Security Council Report: Liberia*, 2010).

Given this, he recommended military and police presence to be maintained.

According to the latest progress report, published in February 2011, by the UN assessing the work of UNMIL, the security situation in Liberia “remained generally stable but fragile” and that “[m]aintaining law and order remained a challenge, with frequent reported incidents of rape and armed robbery, as well as the prevalence of drugs and mob violence” (*Twenty-second Progress Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Liberia*, 2011). On the economic situation, the same report stated that,

“[u]nemployment and underemployment are still major concerns, with *most* livelihood opportunities being in the informal sector” (2011: 4).

At the time of writing, the strength of UNMIL stands at 8 102 military personnel and 1 327 police, including 472 police advisers (*Twenty-second Progress Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Liberia*, 2011). The Liberian presidential election was held on October 11, 2011, with a presidential run-off election, between the incumbent President, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, and the leader of the opposition, Winston Tubman, held on November 8, 2011. Tubman boycotted the run-off election, denying legitimacy to Johnson-Sirleaf (Toweh and Valdmanis, 2011). Post-election violence was also reported (Wolokolie, 2011).

Before discussing the work of the UNMIL and the liberal peace, the context and causes of the war and a framework of assessment will first be presented.

## **UNDERSTANDING LIBERIAN POLITICS: NEOPATRIMONIALISM AS ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK**

Why did Liberia endure so much violence and destruction between 1989 and 2003? Have the underlying causes of the civil war been resolved? Will Liberians enjoy sustainable peace upon UNMIL drawdown?

A wide range of explanations, from a variety of perspectives, has been offered on the Liberian descend into civil war and chaos. The so-called ‘new barbarism’ thesis provided by Kaplan sees the combination of rising populations, ‘tribal animosity’, ecological degradation and marginalisation within the global economy as the main causes of war in Africa (Kaplan, 1994: 2000). However, this so-called ‘new barbarism thesis’ is widely discredited by the majority of African Studies academics; they point out that the wars in West Africa have far more complex roots, and that Kaplan’s causes are not applicable when examined closely (Ellis, 1999; Moran, 2006; Richards, 1996).

Given the tendency by the Western public to view Africa through stereotypes of famine, despair, corruption and perpetual hopelessness, often as the result of commentators constructing an exotic and fantastic other, it is important that academic studies do not fall prey to the intellectually lazy perspective of viewing Liberian politics through stereotypes. Bayart persuasively argues that politics in Africa are ordinary politics

and African societies have their own history, as well as rationality. Western public stereotypes of famine, disease, corruption and hopelessness, as well as the tendency to equate African societies with pathological quest for power and lack of historicity is little more than Orientalist fantasy tainted with racism (Bayart 1993).

Critical of political scientists that described Africa as a continent still at its infancy, “living out its history in a tragic fashion”, Bayart pointed out that it was not until anthropologists who described African societies in detail that sub-Saharan societies became integrated into political analysis (1993: 4). In the field of political science, key concepts such as democracy, authoritarianism and totalitarianism have been developed and discussed based on Western historical experiences and that is the reason why Western political science struggles to account for African politics beyond Orientalist caricatures. He argues that it is only when the historicity of African politics is recognized and that the power dynamics of local political actors are examined, that true accounts of African politics can be produced.

There is academic consensus that the democracy in Liberia was never genuine. Ever since Liberia’s establishment, Liberian politics and power have been in the hands of the settler community (Aboagye and Bah, 2004; Adebajo, 2002a; Leibenow, 1987; Sawyer, 1987). In fact a ‘politics of permanent crisis’ benefited the elites, as they were able to enrich themselves at the expense of the formal state and often able to enjoy international assistance through the sovereign status of the Liberian state (Van de Walle, 2001).

Examining the social and psychological motivations of rank and file soldiers, Ellis identifies the “profit motive” as one of the factors that sustained the fighting (1999: 120). Ellis point out that: “the fighters were less intent on destroying symbols of development than they were on acquiring what they considered to be their just deserts, the consumer goods which they prized as marks of high status and which were so hard for the poor to come by, especially in rural areas” (1999: 122). One Liberian noted:

there is always loot, no matter how small. Most of the loot has been looted several times as territories change hands between the warring factions. Loot is also the motivation for the young fighters to take on front-line assignments. When assigned to their bases in the hinterland they get little or no pay, and may even have to beg

for their food. To them any kind of loot be it big or small, is the only way to find any money (cited in Ellis, 1999: 124-125).

Deep and abject poverty, together with a desire for material goods – for their monetary value, as well as their associated prestige – fuelled the war. The traditional patrimonial nature of Liberian society means that young people are taught that the leaders of society have a duty to distribute goods to their juniors. The sense of injustice at the failure of goods being distributed means that the juniors become frustrated and vent their frustrations on the “symbols of patronage” (Ellis, 1999: 122-123).

An academic at the University of Liberia, notes that, “[the] first on the long list of causes of Liberia’s civil war has to do with class... the Americo-Liberians control politics and benefit, the rest receive nothing”.<sup>31</sup> A Monrovia newspaper editor confirmed that the arrival of the former slaves, in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, was the “landmine” that eventually exploded in the coup in 1980, adding that “the divide [between the Americo-Liberians and other Liberian citizens] is still there”.<sup>32</sup> The societal divide, confirmed another academic, between the Americo-Liberian oligarchy and the rest of the population lies at the root of Liberian civil war.<sup>33</sup>

Conducting a historical analysis and focusing on elite politics, Adebajo names six key causes of the civil war. The list begins with the exclusionary rule of the Americo-Liberian oligarchy. The remaining five issues are: the brutal rule of Samuel Doe; the deleterious effect that Doe’s misrule had on the Armed Forces of Liberia; the personal ambitions and ethnic rivalries that resulted from Doe’s misrule; the sub-regional tensions in West Africa as a result of Doe’s rule; and the power vacuum left by the sudden withdrawal of US support for Doe (Adebajo, 2002a: 19).

The divided society created by the Americo-Liberians meant enforced poverty for the majority of the indigenous people, and few options for societal or material advancement. This societal divide is exacerbated by the fact that the commercial trading class is dominated by ‘foreigners’ – predominantly the Mandingo people, an Islamic group

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<sup>31</sup> Interview Liberian academic A, University of Liberia, Monrovia, November 16, 2009

<sup>32</sup> Interview with Liberian journalist A, Monrovia, Liberia, November 12, 2009.

<sup>33</sup> Interview with Liberian academic B, Monrovia, Liberia, November 17, 2009.

whose traditional home is in Guinea, as well as Lebanese and Indian business people.<sup>34</sup> Whereas the first two generations of Americo-Liberians made their careers in trade, by the 1920s, Americo-Liberians had come to regard commerce as an “ungentlmenly pursuit” (Ellis, 1999: 45). From that time onwards, the Americo-Liberian executive granted licences and trade concessions to foreigners because non-citizens were less likely to use their commercial position to build political constituencies against the ruling oligarchy (Ellis, 1999: 45). By allowing foreigners to dominate commerce, the ruling oligarchy prevented indigenous groups from threatening its hold on power.<sup>35</sup> While the class divide was never absolute, the indigenous majority of the population had very little prospect of social mobility (Ellis, 1999; Moran, 2006). Given the lack of industry in Liberia, becoming a part of the political elite meant access to state-controlled natural resources and a share in the spoils of state. Becoming elite and sharing in the state resources through neopatrimonial networks was the only way of upward mobility.

Liberia is one of the poorest countries in the world. According to the UN Development Program’s (UNDP’s) Human Development Index, a “composite index measuring average achievement in three basic dimensions of human development – a long and healthy life, knowledge, and a decent standard of living”, Liberia rank 182 out of 187 countries (*United Nations Development Program*, 2011). Traditionally, Liberians living in the hinterland live off the land. In the cities, a large number of people work in the informal sector and rely on kinship networks for survival.<sup>36</sup>

Corruption was, and remains, deep and endemic in Liberia. It affects judges, ministers, police, lawyers and every sector of society.<sup>37</sup> Furthermore, corruption is seen not only as a means for buying political legitimacy or patronage but also as a means of

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<sup>34</sup> Interview with United Nations agency manager A, Monrovia, Liberia, November 25, 2009. Both the Mandingo and Lebanese are not, strictly speaking ‘foreigners’. The vast majority of them have been in Liberia for many generations. The Mandingo is a “stranger” group because of their religion and primary activity as a trading people with origins from Guinea. The Lebanese are barred from citizenship by the Liberian constitution. Article V, Section 13 of the 1847 Constitution states: “The great object of forming these Colonies, being to provide a home for the dispersed and oppressed children of Africa, and to regenerate and enlighten this benighted continent, none but persons of colour shall be eligible to citizenship in this Republic.” The phrasing “persons of colour” was changed to “Negroes or persons of Negro descent” in a 1955 revision.

<sup>35</sup> Interview with Liberian Journalist A, Monrovia, Liberia, November 12, 2009.

<sup>36</sup> Interview with United Nations agency staff, Monrovia, Liberia, November 17, 2009.

<sup>37</sup> Interview with Liberian local NGO manager A, Monrovia, Liberia, November 13, 2009.

redistribution to support one's family in a deeply poor society.<sup>38</sup> The causes of Liberia's civil war were complex, multi-faceted and inter-related. At its root was Liberia's socio-economic apartheid, by which the elite enjoyed the fruits of the state and the rest received nothing.

### *Neopatrimonialism*

The concept of neopatrimonialism has become a dominant discourse in explaining and analysing sub-Saharan Africa's political culture, state failure and the politics of nationalism (see, for example, Berman, 1998; Bratton and van de Walle 1994; Reno 1995, 1998; Taylor and Williams 2008; Van de Walle, 2001). The concept has been applied extensively in African Studies literature in explaining political culture and political transition in various post-colonial African contexts. It has also been applied to account for political situations in Liberia and Sierra Leone (Boas, 2001; Reno 1999), in Equatorial Guinea (Wood, 2004), and in Uganda (Mwenda and Tangri, 2005). The concept is not without its critics however, Wai argues that the conception of state rationality is a "vulgar universalism that tends to regard specific historical experiences while subsuming them under the totalitarian grip of an Eurocentric unilinear evolutionist logic" (Wai, 2012: 27). In utilizing the concept of neopatrimonialism in understanding Liberia's civil war and the current liberal peace, it is important that particularities of Liberia's unique situation are given due consideration.

A fundamental problem facing post-colonial African governments is their domestic legitimacy crisis. The African post-colonial regime "enjoyed little popular legitimacy and could not rely on a significant constitutional tradition or civil society." (Van de Walle, 2001: 115). Inheriting a state where borders seldom reflect ethnic and political realities and colonial divide-and-rule accentuated subnational cultural differences, the post-colonial leader often had to rely on nationalism and his own personal charisma to rule. Under-resourced and with little human capacity, the new post-colonial political elites could not ensure development or political stability. They inherited from the colonial rulers a state structure and a style of government that were "illiberal and geared toward enforcing law and order rather than the promotion of citizen welfare" (Van de Walle, 2001: 115).

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<sup>38</sup> Interview with Western NGO manager A, Monrovia, Liberia, November 19, 2009.

Attempts by African elites to build legitimacy through nationalism in the immediate post-independence period have largely failed. As a result, the African ruling classes legitimate their domestic rule and build hegemony through the twin strategies of the threat and actual use of violence and the disbursal of material benefits to supporters of neopatrimonial regimes (Taylor, 2007a: 558). The realities faced by the post-colonial ruler mean that a pattern of personal rule was widespread in post-colonial Africa, it was noted that, “the new African statesman was a personal ruler more than a constitutional and institutional one; he ruled by his skill (as well as the abilities and skills of those he could convince to be his supporters), by his personal power and legitimacy, and not solely by the title granted to him by the office he occupied and the constitution that defined it” (Jackson and Rosberg, 1982: 16).

In a patrimonial state, the affairs of state are seen as an extension of the affairs of the king’s household. In this context where all the land and resources of the state are a part of the king’s estate, it is not really possible to speak of corruption or misuse of public funds, because this presupposes a reference to a norm of separation of public and private (Boas, 2001). In a neopatrimonial state, the state is a hybrid state where the norms of the patrimonial state and of the bureaucratic state co-exist. On the one hand, the ruler rules as if the state’s resources are for him to use and distribute in personal rule; on the other hand, there exist the organs of an impersonal, bureaucratic state where the rule of law reigns.

The clientelist and patronage practices witnessed in post-colonial Africa are products of a process of state formation and should be understood historically. Though they harken back to certain long-standing sociological norms and practices, the neopatrimonial practices in African politics cannot be disassociated from the process of decolonization and the development of modern bureaucratic states in the region (Van der Walle, 2001). The system of personal rule and a lack of institutionalised constraints means that politics in post-colonial Africa are “open to personal and factional struggle aimed at controlling the state apparatus” (Boas, 2001: 698).

#### *Characteristics of neopatrimonial states*

Neopatrimonial states widely exhibit four characteristics, they are: clientelism; access to state resources; centralization of state power; and hybrid regimes.



The first characteristic of neopatrimonial regimes is clientelism. The personal nature of African politics is exhibited by a system where patron-client ties bind the Big Man and to his supporters. The narrowness of the public realm, the strength of clan, and the necessity to help one another in low income societies are the major reasons why clientelism develop in the contemporary African settings (Van de Walle, 2001: 118). Clientelism is seen by many in the African polity as a way to redistribute income and assets throughout the economy. However, while societies with pervasive clientelism are marked by low salience of social class identities, glaring social inequalities remain.

The second characteristic of the neopatrimonial state is access to state resources. Clientelist practices are largely based on privileged access to state resources. The Big Man's ability to access the resources and then distribute it to his networks – either through direct access to state coffers, or by being able to manipulate regulations so that monopolies or immunities from them are made possible – makes the Big Man successful. However, consolidating power and maintaining support by disbursing state resources to select groups of clients is highly damaging to the economy (Mwenda and Tangri, 2005). The consequences of the dynamics of neopatrimonialism are that over time, corruption infects the highest levels of the state and government revenues decline. The politicization of state economic resource allocation and corruption are the most important factors leading to the economic crisis faced by African countries in the 1970s and 1980s (Mwenda and Tangri, 2005).

The third characteristic of the neopatrimonial state is the centralization of power. In the neopatrimonial state, the president is at the summit of power. Revenues are raised by central government, with local governments having little prerogatives. Power becomes centralized around the president who is often “above the law” (Van der Walle, 2001: 125). He has access to the state coffers and delegates little of his authority. The office of the presidency becomes a parallel administration and the civil service is relegated to the role of interpreting and implementing the president's policy choices.

As a result of the above, post-colonial and neopatrimonial states in Africa exhibits a fourth characteristic: hybrid regime. At the surface, there appears to be a formal, modern bureaucratic state. The three branches of government are represented with ministers and bureaucracies staffed by a sizable contingent of civil servants. However, these organs of

state often do not function. Running parallel and coexisting uneasily with the machinery of the modern state is the personal rule of the Big Man.

### *The making of a Neopatrimonial Liberia*

Despite being the oldest republic in Africa, the Liberian state was also created through political expediency as a response to foreign political, economic and cultural dictates and exhibited the four characteristics of neopatrimonial states; further, the Liberian elite was unable to create a coherent and indigenous consensus nor was it able to build regime legitimacy, eventually leading to state collapse (Mgbeoji, 2003: 1).

The Americo-Liberians are not exclusively made up by the 300 original settler families; most of the elites came from assimilated 'tribal' elites who had adopted Americo-Liberian culture, so they had diversity and depth of local ties. The Americo-Liberians through the True Whig Party, established neopatrimonial rule in Liberia (Boas, 2001; Reno 1998). By the 1920s, the Americo-Liberian had ensured that a complex system of patron-client relationships was established throughout Liberian society with the elites firmly established at the top. In 1926, the American rubber and tyre company Firestone leased a million acres of rubber plantation from Liberia for 99 years at 6 cents an acre. Revenue generated from this deal flowed not to the state but to influential individuals such as President Tubman (Boas, 2001). Natural resources sustained the Liberian elite and allowed it to buy loyalty and support through a complex system of patron-client relationships. By 1970 the Liberian Iron Mining Company and Firestone were still providing 50 percent of the government revenues (Reno, 1998: 84).

Tubman came into office in 1944 and he died in 1971, succeeded by vice president William Tolbert. Tubman was a personal ruler of Liberia, "he subverted every institution of society into an image of Tubman as the national symbol of sovereign statehood" (Boas, 2001: 704). After Tubman, Tolbert tried to introduce an anti-corruption commission, however as he and his family were among the prime offenders, the anti-corruption measures were little more than a façade. It was the glamour of the Tubman era that president Doe and warlord Taylor aspired to (Boas, 2001).

When Doe executed 13 top officials during his coup in April, 1980 it appeared that he had overthrown the hated Americo-Liberian elite. However, even though Doe installed

fellow Krahns to key military and security units he was not able to control Liberia without the existing network of Big Man in the civil services as well as political and economic spheres in Liberia. In turn, the Big Man needed access to state power to continue their rent-seeking behaviour (Reno, 1998). In an effort to bolster his support, Doe increased civil servants employment by 300 percent between 1980 and 1985 and salaries increased from 55 to 74 percent of budget from 1979 to 1985. By playing to US fears of communism and Libya, Doe also received support in the form of aid. Between 1980 and 1985, over US\$500 million in aid and military wares from the US, intended to bolster Liberia's defences against Libya's Gadhafi, was received by Liberia (Mgbeoji, 2003: 17). As a result of the corruption and chaotic tax and investment policies, large companies started departing Liberia. In 1985, The National Iron Ore Company left. Soon after, the German-run Bong Mining Company wound down operations and finally, the Liberian American Mining Company (LAMCO) departed in 1988.

Taylor's invasion of Liberia on Christmas Eve, 1989 and the subsequent chaos and random violence has often been portrayed as wanton and senseless. However, "in fact, war in Liberia has followed a clear logic. Warlord pursuit of commerce has been the critical variable in conflicts there. Strongmen have used commerce to consolidate their political power within a coalition of interest among themselves, businesspeople, and local fighters" (Reno, 1989: 79). The emergence of Taylor was only possible where there was an established neopatrimonial state, a chaotic state of affairs as a result of Doe's rule and where natural resources and foreign support provided financial sustenance. The rise of Taylor's warlord politics was not primarily the result of the collapse of state authority and capacity, but as a result of a coalition between "enterprising strongmen, small-scale foreign commercial operators and a small segment of the country's youth" (Reno, 1989: 80).

Given the pre-existing neopatrimonial hybrid regime that existed in Liberia since the rule of the True Whig Party and given the deeply corrupt and divided nature of Liberian society, will the efforts by the international community be sufficient to build sustainable peace in Liberia?

## **THE LIBERAL PEACE: A FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSMENT**

Traditional peacekeeping aims “to contain conflicts and prevent them from escalating, and to maintain stability, so that political solution can be achieved between states” (Newman, Paris and Richmond, 2009: 6). Its principle concern is war between states. In the post-Cold War era, peacebuilding operations reflect “the idea that maintaining peace in post-conflict societies requires a multi-faceted approach, with attention to a wide range of social, economic and institutional needs” (Newman, Paris and Richmond, 2009: 7). The liberal peace project aims not only to maintain peace between states, as was the case with traditional peacekeeping, but to build peace within and between states “on the basis of liberal democracy and market economics” (Newman, Paris and Richmond, 2009: 7). The liberal peace is premised on the assumption that democracies are more peaceful. In 2000, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan proclaimed that “[t]here are many good reasons for promoting democracy... not the least – in the eyes of the United Nations – is that, when sustained over time, it is a highly effective means of preventing conflict, both within and between states” (Annan, cited in Paris, 2004: 42).

The liberal peace is comprehensive and based on the twin pillars of democracy and market economics (Mac Ginty and Richmond, 2009; Newman, Paris and Richmond, 2009; Paris, 2004). The liberal peace thesis is based on the idea that liberal democratic societies are less prone to war amongst themselves and are stable domestically, and that this is because democracies have established procedures, such as voting, negotiation and mediation, to resolve conflict (Rummel, 1997). Internationally, democracies do not go to war with each other because there are more constraints on democratic leaders to wage war (Doyle, 1986; Paris, 2004). Further, economic interdependence between democracies that pursue liberal economic policies means they are less likely to resort to war (O’Neal and Russett, 2001).

However, while mature democracies are more peaceful, this does not mean the process of transformation from illiberal to liberal free-market economies will necessarily be peaceful. A number of studies have shown that countries in transition from illiberal to liberal democracies are prone to internal and international conflict (Bremmer, 2006; Paris, 2004:45; Snyder, 2000). Case studies in Sri Lanka, Algeria, Sudan, Burundi, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Uganda, Chad and Pakistan highlight the “conflict inducing effects of political liberalisation” (Paris, 2004: 45).

Deconstructing the liberal peace into its intellectual constituents, Richmond identifies four main strands of thinking, they are: the victor's peace, the institutional peace, the constitutional peace, and the civil peace (Richmond, 2005). The victor's peace depends on a military victory and domination by the victor. Institutional peace rests upon the set of international norms and legal institutions created after the Treaty of Westphalia. The constitutional peace is premised on Kant's argument that persons ought to be ends in themselves and that peace rests upon democracy, cosmopolitan values and trade. Finally, the civil peace is derived from direct action of citizens in defence of basic human rights. Sometimes complementary, at other times contradictory, these four strands of thinking within the liberal peace framework reflect the liberal aspiration. It is also upon these four strands of thinking that the practice of the liberal peace on the ground is developed. The peace provided rests upon a framework of "democracy, the rule of law, human rights, free trade and development" (Richmond and Franks, 2009:5). As a comprehensive and multifaceted operation, the liberal peace framework in practice involve activities such as promoting domestic security; strengthening governance and the rule of law; promoting development and humanitarian assistance; demobilisation and disarmament of former combatants; stabilising the economy; employment creation; repatriation of refugees; responding to food security; addressing health concerns; strengthening law and order; promoting democratic practices; bolstering institutions of justice and legislation; resuming public service delivery; addressing land reform claims; and redrafting and amending constitutions (Newman, Paris and Richmond, 2009: 7).

From the four strands of thinking within the liberal peace framework, Richmond and Franks identify three different "graduations" or models according to which the liberal peace project can be classified (2009: 7). They are: the conservative model, the orthodox model and the emancipatory model.

The first, the conservative model, is characterised by a top-down approach. This approach is characterised by military intervention and the imposition of a state-led peace. The US's unilateral state-building efforts in Somalia, the Balkans, Afghanistan and Iraq are examples of a conservative model which reflects a victor's peace (2009: 8). The orthodox model of the liberal peace is more "sensitive to local ownership" and aims at "governance via consensual negotiation" (Newman, Paris and Richmond, 2009: 9). It involves both a

top-down and a bottom-up approach; the model understands peace as being led by both the state and civil society and aims to foster the right conditions for democracy, the rule of law, the free market and human rights by supporting local civil society. The orthodox model begins by taking the same approach as the conservative model, by initially providing security; thereafter, it “builds a peace based upon the international assumption of technical superiority over its subjects via the claim of the normative universality of the liberal peace” (2009: 8). Finally, the emancipatory model takes a more critical stance towards Western coerciveness, conditionality and dependency. It encourages a closer relationship with the subject of the liberal peace and emphasises the importance of consent and local ownership. It is distinguished from the conservative and orthodox models by its bottom-up approach, demonstrating far greater regard for local agency. The emancipatory model allows for far greater and more nuanced considerations of local actors. While not departing from universalist assumptions, the emancipatory model draws from the civil peace strand of thinking and is directed by private actors and social movements (Richmond and Franks, 2009: 9).

These three graduations often blended into each other and are variously employed during different stages of peacebuilding. The conservative model is most likely to be used at the outset of the peacebuilding mission, shifting to the orthodox model during the reconstruction process. As the liberal peace project nears its conclusion and the international actors begin to consider exit strategies, they may begin to consider the emancipatory model, so as to allow local actors to continue the peacebuilding process.

In assessing the liberal peace being constructed in Liberia, it is important to understand the local contexts and to identify the graduations that are being constructed. It is important to evaluate the work of the liberal peace both on its own terms and from a critical perspective. Assessing the liberal peace in terms of the four strands of thinking and the three graduations, Richmond and Franks argue, “will lead to a better understanding of 1) the type of peace being created, 2) impediments to peace, and 3) the sustainability of this peace.

What follows is an assessment of the liberal peach in Liberia that uses Richmond and Franks’ framework and bears in mind the historical and social contexts of Liberia.

## **ASSESSMENT OF THE UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN LIBERIA**

On August 18, 2003, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) set in motion the creation of an international stabilisation force for Liberia. First, ECOMIL was established by UNSC Resolution 1497 (2003), so as to: “support the implementation of the June 17, 2003 ceasefire agreement” (UNSC Resolution 1497, 2003). The ECOMIL force was a peace enforcement operation characterised by a top-down approach. Upon fulfilment of UNSC Resolution 1497, UNSC Resolution 1509 established the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), which took over from ECOMIL on October 1, 2003.

UNMIL is a comprehensive peacebuilding operation. It began as a conservative model to establish peace in Liberia through the deployment of a large UN force. This mission evolved into an orthodox model of peacebuilding with a mix of both top-down and bottom-up approaches. UNMIL operates as a state-led peacebuilding effort in conjunction with international NGOs and financial institutions. It also aims to promote and create the right conditions for democracy, the rule of law, the free market and human rights.

Between 2003 and 2004, UNMIL could be typologised as fitting the conservative model of enforcing peace from the top-down. In this regard, UNMIL was successful. A public survey commissioned by the UN and published in January 2006 showed that 94 percent of Liberians found UNMIL had improved the security situation, 91 percent said they felt safe, and 90 percent thought UNMIL to have done a good job of implementing the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (Kransno, 2006: 5).

However, by its own assessment, UNMIL has not been successful according to the criterion of the orthodox model or even the emancipatory model. According to the *Twenty-second Progress Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Liberia*, published on February 14, 2011, the Secretary-General assessed the security situation in Liberia as generally stable, but still fragile (2011: 3). His assessment was that the security agencies were not receiving sufficient resources for their development and that the new army would not meet the schedule to attain full operational capacity. According to the report, the Liberian National Police continue to suffer “capacity shortfalls in the vital areas of administration, logistics, mobility, finance and community relations” (2011: 6). Regarding judicial and legal institutions, the report notes that “[l]imitations in human capacity, infrastructure and equipment... continued to impede justice delivery” (2011: 7).

The report notes that, regarding the consolidation of state security, some progress has been made, but that the government of Liberia continues to struggle to deliver services outside of Monrovia, due to “logistical problems and insufficient operational budgets” (2011: 8). On governance, “legal bottlenecks” are cited as impeding the government’s anti-corruption policy. According to its own standards and its own assessments (2011: 8), UNMIL failed to establish a self-sustaining peace that would allow the international community to move toward the emancipatory model of peacebuilding, and exit the country.

Assessing UNMIL in a 2004 report, Aboagye and Bah noted a weakness in reforming of the Liberian governance sector. They noted that, given the virtually complete collapse of Liberia’s national institutions, the weakness of its political parties, public sector corruption, and non-existent capacity of the government to govern, “the election benchmark and exit strategy scheduled for October 2005 would not set Liberia on a course of durable peace based on good governance” (2004: 17).

From a critical perspective, and taking into account the neopatrimonial nature of Liberian state where a hybrid regime has being in existence for over a century and where Taylor was able to thrive as a warlord, it is surprising to see that UNMIL has not taken any cognisance of the fact that a neopatrimonial and hybrid regime exists in Liberia where patron-client relationships are pervasive. There is wide consensus amongst Liberian interviewees that the societal divide between the elites and the ‘indigenous’ population was the prime cause of the Liberian civil war, and that corruption remains endemic. Further, a great deal of scholarship shows Liberia to be a neopatrimonial regime where the formal organs of state have always been without capacity and that the country was under the personal rule of Tubman, Doe and Taylor.

UNMIL was mandated to support humanitarian and human rights assistance; to promote democracy; and to support peace and security and to build capacity in support of the formal state. However, this programme of capacity building ignores the fact that impersonal organs of state have always being co-opted by the personal. While democratic elections have resulted in more members of the indigenous population moving into positions of power, the fact remains that there is no middle class in Liberia, and therefore no united bloc with effective resources to act as a societal check and balance to the ruling elites. Further, given that those who make up the traditional elite in Liberia are better



educated, resourced and informed, they are better able to access international funding and assistance – resulting in a perverse re-establishment of the traditional oligarchic elite. By realigning themselves with the liberal peace agenda and by being seen as ‘responsible’ by international liberal elites, the Liberian elites have gained recognition as a part of the transnational liberal elite. They are then able to count on the moral and material support of the transnational institutions (Taylor, 2007: 555). However, recognition of the Liberian elite as a part of the transnational elite does not mean that liberal democracy is practiced at a local level in Liberia.

International aid organisations are aware that the deep societal divide in Liberia lies at the root of Liberian insecurity; however, they do not wish to “rock the boat” by pointing out that the fundamental problem of social division is not being addressed.<sup>39</sup> While democracy and grassroots engagement through decentralisation receive official support, they have not been implemented much, as the central government is not motivated to surrender power to the local community.<sup>40</sup> Associated with the limited economic opportunities for Liberians, corruption is endemic and rampant. Corruption is widely recognised by international agencies and local people as a major impediment to sustainable peace in Liberia.<sup>41</sup> One official at an international NGO informed us that the Liberian people do not perceive the government as oppressive, but rather as corrupt and inept. He added that Liberians are also very comfortable with corruption, adding that the attitude of Liberians was that “you are a sucker if you don’t take bribes”.<sup>42</sup> The patronage system is pervasive in Liberia and the corruption extends to the international organisations there.<sup>43</sup> Despite a string of failures, the response of the World Bank and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) amongst other international organisations, is to

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<sup>39</sup> Interview with Western NGO manager A, Monrovia, Liberia, November 19, 2009.

<sup>40</sup> Interview with United Nations agency staff, November 17, 2009.

<sup>41</sup> Interview with Western NGO manager A. Interview with Liberian local NGO manager A, November 13, 2009.

<sup>42</sup> Interview with Western NGO manager A, November 19, 2009.

<sup>43</sup> Interview with Liberian Journalist B, Monrovia, Liberia, November 12, 2009; Interview with Liberian local NGO manager A, Monrovia, Liberia, November 13, 2009.

continue with the liberal peace by promoting good governance programmes and the rule of law.<sup>44</sup>

Commenting on building democratic institutions in Liberia, a Liberian local NGO manager describes a case of local resistance and adaptation to the democratic institutions imposed by the UN. He points out that the opposition party and civil society are “holding places” for out-of-favour politicians. He points out that political parties “resurrect” before elections, and their members often cross the floor to the ruling party after the election.<sup>45</sup> A Liberian academic, confirmed that the Liberian government, academia and civil society were widely sceptical and dissatisfied with the Western-led liberal project. Programmes from running elections to disarmament, demobilisation and repatriation programmes are run from the top down and do not consider local contexts.<sup>46</sup>

The ‘disconnect’ between Liberians and international organisations is pervasive. There was an overwhelming consensus amongst the Liberian interviewees that the internationals did not understand the pressing needs of Liberians, and that international lending agencies are often ignorant of local conditions and their employees live in isolation from the local population for security reasons. In return, international aid and financial agency workers complain of a lack of capacity in Liberia. An international financial institution official emphasised that correct tender procedures were of the utmost importance, despite the desperate need for funds to be released to build basic infrastructure.<sup>47</sup>

The disconnect is not limited to the government of Liberia and international financial organisations. Local NGOs complain of international NGOs’ ignorance of context and conditions in Liberia. They complain that international NGOs reject their proposals and later implement those proposals as their own.<sup>48</sup> As an example, we were told of the practice of a moaning feast, where the people would traditionally gather at a funeral.

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<sup>44</sup> Interview with official, World Bank, November 23, 2009; Interview with Western government aid agency manager A, Monrovia, November 19, 2009.

<sup>45</sup> Interview with Liberian NGO manager, November 13, 2009.

<sup>46</sup> Interview with Liberian Academic B, November 17, 2009 14:00

Interview with Liberian NGO manager B, Monrovia, Liberia, November 17, 2009.

<sup>47</sup> Interview with International Financial Institution manager A, Monrovia, Liberia, November 23, 2009.

<sup>48</sup> Interview with Liberian NGO manager D, Monrovia, Liberia, November 20, 2009.

Talking and reconciliation in the community take place at the funeral feast – as the loved ones are sent off to the next world, so are the bad feelings. An international NGO, seeing the effectiveness of the moaning feast, provided funding for such a feast. However, without the actual groundwork of preparation, of bringing the people together and facilitating the reconciliation, it became just a free meal.<sup>49</sup>

My assessment is that a ‘virtual peace’ has been built in Liberia. As has been the case in Cambodia, the Liberian liberal peace has been “modified by a combination of local political, economic and social dynamics, international failings, and the broader theoretical failings of the liberal peacebuilding process” (Richmond and Franks, 2007: 28). There is widespread disillusionment and disappointment within local civil society (academia, the media and NGOs) regarding UNMIL. On the one hand, a common complaint amongst international NGOs is about a lack of capacity amongst Liberians; Liberians in turn complain about international expatriates’ ignorance of their local conditions. UNMIL has been successful at enforcing a traditional victor’s peace; however, it has not been successful at building a self-sustaining peace in Liberia.

## **CONCLUSION**

UN peacekeeping has evolved considerably from its initial incarnation as cease fire observers to today’s comprehensive state building project. At its current drawdown phase, the UNMIL is at the emancipatory model stage where greater and more nuanced considerations of local actors and great effort at building local consensus is a priority. However, as the fieldwork uncovered, the consensus of the Liberian civil society is that inadequate consultation is being carried out by the UNMIL and international NGOs. In addition, the neopatrimonial dimension of Liberian politics and economy, referred to by some Liberian interviewees as the “divide between the haves and have-nots” are ignored by international NGOs and UNMIL. The view that the liberal peace is far from being benign and is aimed at transforming post-conflict countries to a liberal-democratic viewpoint is widely held by critics of the liberal peace (Heathershaw, 2008; Higate and Henry, 2009; Richmond and Franks 2009). The problem facing the international liberal hegemony is

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<sup>49</sup> Interview with Liberian NGO manger B, Monrovia, Liberia, November 17, 2009.

that they ignore the political realities in Liberia where a hybrid regime with parallel authorities of personal rule and bureaucratic rule is at play. The description by Van de Walle about the 'misfit' between the international community and the local everyday is also a fitting description of the Liberian situation:

The public policy community tends to downplay the patrimonial dimensions of these regimes. It views the pervasive clientelism as little more than an odd atavism, which a couple of additional "capacity building" projects promoting greater administrative hygiene and technical expertise will soon entirely do away with. It refuses to accept the idea that clientelism in these states is more than incidental... for example, a striking reality is that most anticorruption strategies being devised in the policy community simply assume that there is a rational-legal logic at the apex of these states that will be available to carry out the strategy; in fact, all too often, leaders at the apex of the state choose to undermine these strategies, which threaten practices they find useful and profitable (Van de Walle, 2001: 127).

In the same way that the US administration's support sustained the Doe regime in Liberia, international aid to Liberia is again supporting the elites. As they are better educated, own property and are better connected, the elites are better able to access international aid funding to support their own patronage networks. The situation where aid and peacebuilding resources are diverted by local ruling elites in supporting their own networks is not new. In their analysis of patronage politics in Uganda, Mwenda and Tangri noted that, "the donor reforms have only partly undermined the system of state patronage which has owed much to the specific relationship between government and international donors (2005: 451). They point out further that, "In providing aid, both the IFIs [International Financial Institution] and the bilateral Western donors have paid little attention to the nature of the political system prevailing in Uganda since 1986. They have backed a quasi-authoritarian government with cascades of cash" (2005: 452).

By ignoring the neopatrimonial political structure of Liberia, it is plain to see that free elections; good governance; the rule of law; and an independent police service, army and judiciary – a system of impersonal state apparatuses – directly contradict and

challenge existing patron-client relationships. Given the ruling elites' need for international support, they agree to and pay lip service to liberal reforms introduced with the liberal peace, but in fact they undermine the efforts at capacity building with the result that a hybrid, virtual peace is built.

Given the context of African neopatrimonial rule and the failure of the international liberal elite to impose a liberal peace, we will now proceed to examine how the Chinese are perceived by locals and international actors in Liberia, and whether a notional 'Chinese approach to peacebuilding' is competing with or complementing, the liberal peacebuilding in Liberia.

## **CHAPTER EIGHT: CASE STUDY: CHINESE APPROACH TO PEACEBUILDING IN LIBERIA**

This chapter examines the emerging and evolving Chinese practice of peacebuilding in Liberia. It focuses on China's bilateral aid programmes as well as the multilateral participation in peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities in Liberia. Bilateral assistance from Beijing to Monrovia criss-crosses Beijing's multilateral engagement within the larger engagement in the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) implemented by the government of Liberia in conjunction with international donors and partners. At first glance, China is an active contributor to and participant in the liberal peace project in rebuilding Liberia. In fact, the many Chinese construction firms in construction sites around Monrovia and Chinese blue-helmeted logistics and engineering troops rebuilding rural roads in Liberia makes China one of the more visible contributing countries. China also reports to the Liberian Reconstruction and Development Committee (LRDC). However, upon closer examination, we can discern that Beijing continues to hold a different understanding of peacebuilding. Asserting and projecting its Third World identity in Liberia, Beijing practices its unique approach to peacebuilding by focusing its contribution overwhelmingly on infrastructure rehabilitation and economic revitalization programmes of the PRS and completely ignoring governance and rule of law programmes. This approach – the emergent Chinese approach to peacebuilding – has roots in the 1980s when China begun its Reform and Opening up programmes. During this time, China received substantial Japanese financial assistance to build new infrastructure using its nature resources as collateral (Brautigam, 2009).

Insofar as it engages with, and participates in, liberal peace projects, China focuses on economic activities that have high visibility and quick results. This focus on reviving basic infrastructure such as roads and bridges as the means of production is guided by, and consistent with, the foundational Eight Principles of Foreign Aid announced by Premier Zhou Enlai in 1963-64. This Chinese traditional approach to foreign aid in Africa is still evident as China's official media, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defence saturates Chinese media with Chinese peacekeepers road rehabilitation accomplishments through its engineering contingent in UNMIL (Gui, 2012).

The Chinese approach to peacebuilding is not carried out, debated, written on, revised or criticised by international organizations, governments and civil society to the same extent the liberal peace is. While there is evidently a unique Chinese model in providing aid assistance to and engaging in investments in African countries (Brautigam, 2009), the fact that the Chinese peacekeeping participation is still quite new means that it may still be too early to pronounce on precisely what the Chinese approach to peacebuilding is. In the same way that the liberal peace is a discourse (Richmond and Mac Ginty, 2009), the Chinese approach to peacebuilding is also a discourse, a discourse that is developing, adopting and responding to different domestic and international demands and challenges. In the context of this thesis, the Chinese approach to peacebuilding discourse articulates the contradictory identities of difference from the West (Third World identity) on the one hand, but at the same time, demonstrate a willingness to contribute to the maintenance of the current international order (responsible great power) by contributing to UNPKOs.

This chapter is arranged as follows. First, the diplomatic relations between China and Liberia will be presented. This is followed by an outline of Liberia's pre- and post-civil war economic situation, and the emerging trade relations between it and China. Thirdly, the particulars of Chinese approach to broadly defined peacebuilding activities in Liberia, comprising aid, trade and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) will be outlined and discussed. Fourthly, the Chinese contribution will be situated and contrasted against the peacebuilding contributions taken by the UK, a core Western country and fellow permanent member on the UNSC. Fifthly, Chinese participation in the UNMIL will be contrasted against its other African UN peacekeeping engagements. Finally, an assessment of the Chinese approach to peacebuilding in practice in Liberia will be presented.

## **SINO-LIBERIAN RELATIONS**

### *Diplomatic ties*

Liberia has taken advantage of the so-called 'chequebook diplomacy' between Taipei and Beijing, where the two sides compete for recognition and diplomatic legitimacy in Africa. Liberia formally established diplomatic relations with the PRC on February 17, 1977 (Economic and Commercial Counsellor's Office of the Embassy of the People's Republic in Liberia, 2004). When Samuel Doe announced that Liberia was establishing relations with

Taipei, Beijing responded by severing official relations with Liberia on October 9, 1989. In August 3, 1993, under Amos Sawyer's IGNU government, diplomatic relations resumed between Monrovia and Beijing. On the September 5, 1997, Charles Taylor announced that Liberia recognised 'two Chinas'. This led again to the PRC's severing of relations on September 9 of the same year.

Relations resumed between the PRC and the Republic of Liberia on the October 11, 2003. On January 12, 2004 the PRC embassy was re-opened in Monrovia. In August, 2005, the National Transitional Legislative Assembly of Liberia passed into law that Liberia recognized only one China, making Liberia the first country in the world to recognize the One China Policy through legislative means (Economic and Commercial Counsellor's Office of the Embassy of the People's Republic in Liberia, 2007).

Official high level bilateral visits between the People's Republic of China and Republic of Liberia are summarised as follows:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Visit</b>
June 1978	Liberian President William Tolbert visits Beijing
May 1982	Liberian President Samuel Doe visits Beijing
December 1984	PRC Vice President Tian Jiyun visits Monrovia
August 1994	PRC Deputy Foreign Minister Tian Zhengpei visits Monrovia
November 2003	PRC Assistant Foreign Minister Lu Guozeng visits Monrovia
December 2003	Liberian Foreign Minister Thomas Yaya Nimbely and Commerce Minister Samuel Wlue attend the Ministerial Conference of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation in Addis Ababa and meet with PRC Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing
August 2004	Liberian Foreign minister Nimely visits Beijing
September 2004	Liberian Justice Minister Kabineh Ja'neh attends International Congress of Penal Law held in China
March 2005	Liberian Defence Minister Daniel Chea visits Beijing
January 2006	Ambassador Li Qiangmin, Special Envoy of the Chinese Foreign Minister visits Monrovia



January 2006	PRC Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing attends the Inauguration of President Sirleaf as Special Envoy of President Hu Jintao and pays an official visit to Liberia
March 2006	PRC Deputy Commerce Minister Wei Jianguo visits Monrovia
March 2006	A delegation of five political parties, the Unity Party, the Congress for Democratic Change, the Liberty Party, the National Patriotic Party and the Coalition for Transformation of Liberia led by Charles Clark, Chairman of the ruling Unity Party, visit China.
June 2006	Ma Wenpu, Vice Minister of International Department of the Chinese Communist Party visits Monrovia.
May 2006	Liberian Gender Minister Voba Gayflor visits China
September 2006	Liberian Defence Minister Brownie Samukai visits China
October 2006	Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf visits Beijing
November 2006	President Pro-tempore of the Senate Isaac Nyenabo visits China as head of the Liberian parliamentary delegation.
February 2007	PRC President Hu Jintao visits Liberia
April 2010	Vice Minister of Commerce in charge of China's foreign aid and foreign economic relations Fu Ziyang visits Liberia

*Table 8.1 Source: People's Republic of China, Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

As can be seen in the above table, there was heightened activity in 2006 when China hosted the Beijing Summit of the 2006 FOCAC. This culminated in the visit by President Hu in 2007 where a cancellation of debt of US\$10 million was announced as well as a US\$1,5 million donation to Liberia (Wang and Gao, 2009). In the context of Chinese relations with African states, Liberia does not have particularly close historical ties, such as that between China and Zimbabwe, Zambia or Tanzania. In fact, Liberia's traditional alliance with the US and its on-again off-again relationship with Taipei means the two countries can claim little fraternal connections.

#### *Liberia's trade relations with China*

At the time of writing, available data shows Liberia's economy is still dominated by agriculture (including rubber) (table 8.2).<sup>50</sup> Reflecting its status as the second largest 'flag of convenience' country in the world, Liberia's most import partners are shipbuilding countries of South Korea, China, Singapore and Japan (table 8.3). Liberia's export partners are dominated by EU members, this being mainly rubber exports to Germany and Poland (table 8.5); this is followed by rubber exports to South Africa and the United States. In 2010, China was ranked as number six on Liberia's list of export partners. However, we can expect China to rapidly rise up the ladder, driven primarily by China Union's acquisition of the Bong Iron ore mine in 2009.

### **Liberian GDP by sector**

	<b>1991</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2008</b>
Agriculture	55,6	73,3	61,3
Industry	16,8	9,6	16,8
Services	27,6	17,1	21,9

*Table 8.2 Source: EUROSTAT*

### **Liberia's Import Partners (2010)**

<b>Rk</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Euro (millions)</b>	<b>percent</b>
1	South Korea	4 480,1	34.1
2	China	3 630,8	27.7
3	Singapore	2 401,0	18,3
4	Japan	1 572,8	12,0
5	EU 27	445,2	3,4
6	United States	157,0	3,4

*Table 8.3 Source: EUROSTAT. 2012*

<b>Liberia's Export</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Euro (millions)</b>	<b>percent</b>
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<sup>50</sup> See Research Notes for discussion on the accuracy and quality of statistical data.

<b>Partners (2010)</b>			
1	EU 27	200,5	31,4
2	South Africa	184,8	29
3	United States	124,7	19,5
4	Canada	28	4,4
5	Norway	17,3	2,7
6	China	15,7	2,5

*Table 8.4 Source: EUROSTAT. 2012*

**Liberia's main export destinations 2002-2006 (\$ millions)**

	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>
<b>Germany</b>	569	406	172	43	270
<b>South Africa</b>	1	1	1	1	186
<b>Poland</b>	73	103	130	45	181
<b>US</b>	43	56	81	88	131
<b>Spain</b>	8	19	0	113	127
<b>Total, including others</b>	1 080	929	911	973	1 156

*Table 8.5 Source: IMF, Direction of Trade Statistics. 2007 Economist Intelligence Unit cited in African Centre for Economic Transformation, 2009: 10*

China's trade with African has been rising exponentially since the turn of the century (Brautigam, 2009; Taylor, 2009). Between 2004 and 2006, the value of Liberian imports from China doubled in value. This doubled again between 2006 and 2008. As a country coming out of civil war and with most of its infrastructure destroyed, Liberia has had little but rubber to export and it imports the majority of its food, manufactured and consumer

goods (African Centre for Economic Transformation, 2009: 8). As can be seen from the table below (table 8.6), the entry of UNMIL to Liberia in 2003 led to a jump and a sustained increase in Liberian imports from China. This increased economic activity is consistent with the reports that UNMIL brought peace and stability to Liberia. However, even as Liberian imported increasing amounts of consumer goods, its exports (mainly rubber) have remained flat, leading to an ever-increasing trade deficit in China's favour.

**Liberia's exports and imports with China (\$ millions)**

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
<b>Import from China</b>	4 792	5 427	8 365	15 641	21 114	28 768	36 230	55 883
<b>Exports to China</b>	54	56	54	56	52	50	53	57

*Table 8.6 Source: CNMcKinsey cited in African Centre for Economic Transformation, 2009: 9.*

Prior to the civil war, iron ore mining contributed 64 percent of Liberia's exports and accounted for nearly 25 percent of its GDP (Mbendi Information Services, 2012). The Liberian civil war rendered its traditional formal mining sector paralyzed. For Liberia to take advantage of trade with China, it needs to revive iron ore mining and explore the promise of offshore oil. The signing of the Bong Iron ore mine deal in 2009 (with 1.3 billion tons of proven reserves) between the government of Liberia and China Union (a Chinese consortium between Wuhan Iron and Steel and the China-Africa Development Fund) to the value of US\$2.6 billion promises to give the Liberian economy a much needed boost when it comes online at the end of 2012 (Creamer, 2009).<sup>51</sup> ArcelorMittal, an Indian based firm which entered Liberia in 2005, shipped the first test shipment of iron ore in September, 2011 (Bulk Materials International Online, 2011). However, no data showing iron ore exports has been reflected in the most current economic data.

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<sup>51</sup> Production at the China Union's Bong Iron Ore Mine has yet to begin (November 2012).

### *Chinese foreign direct investments (FDI) and economic activities in Liberia*

As already stated, the most significant Chinese FDI investment in Liberia to date is the US\$2,8 billion deal that China Union signed with Liberian government in 2009, making this deal the single largest investment in Liberia (Creamer, 2009; Zhang, 2010). Wuhan Iron and Steel, the majority shareholder in China Union is the largest iron and steel maker in China (Zhang, 2010). In a bid to secure iron ore for its smelters in China, Wuhan Iron and Steel have been aggressively acquiring iron ore mines from countries around the world, including Liberia, Madagascar and Brazil (Zhang, 2010). In addition to China Union, the Economic and Commerce Counsellor's Office of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China publishes a list of the twelve major Chinese companies in Liberia on the Chinese version of its website, they are as follows:

<b>Chinese Company</b>	<b>Nature of business in Liberia</b>
1. Henan International Cooperation Project	Roads, bridges
2. Chongqing Foreign Construction Corporation	Roads, bridges
3. Guangdong Xinguang Group	Construction
4. Qingdao Construction Group	Construction
5. Hunan Construction Engineering Group	Construction
6. Hainan Trinidad Investments Limited	Construction, real estate
7. Dalian International Corporation Group Company	Fisheries, cold storage
8. Lilian iron mining Investment Limited	Iron mining
9. ZTE Corporation Communications	Telecommunications
10. Luoyang	Oxygen, agricultural equipment
11. Lee Group Rubber Processing	Rubber

12. Jinqiao Hotel Industry Investment Co., Ltd	Hotel
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*Table 8.8 Source: Economic and Commerce Counsellor's Office, the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Liberia, 2009)*

This list (table 8.8) cannot be exhaustive and is likely out-dated given the rapidity of commercial movements.<sup>52</sup> The fact that half of the major (6 out of 12) Chinese companies listed are engaged in construction is unsurprising given the process of post-war reconstruction in Liberia and Chinese construction firms' competitive advantage in this regard. As can be seen, Chinese companies are also engaged in mining, rubber processing, telecommunications and fishing. Individual Chinese entrepreneurs are also selling electricity generators and engaged in hotels and restaurant businesses.<sup>53</sup>

Infrastructure construction by Chinese construction firms in Liberia takes two forms: projects funded with bilateral aid, granted by the Chinese central government to Liberia as a gift; and World Bank-funded projects which Chinese contractors bid for.<sup>54</sup>

In the case of World Bank-funded projects, they are bid for by Chinese contractors on a for-profit basis. The Chinese contractors are state-owned enterprises and are not shy to express their ambitions to expand their businesses in Africa.<sup>55</sup> According to the Chinese embassy in Liberia, Chongqing International Construction Corporation won the World Bank tender for the US\$15,66 million 24,5 kilometre road rehabilitation project which began in Monrovia in November 2007 (Economic and Commercial Councillors Office of the Embassy of the PRC in Liberia, 2009). The China Henan International Group won the World Bank tender for a 56 kilometre road rehabilitation project between Monrovia and Buchanan, the second largest city in Liberia in 2011 (Economic and Commercial Councillors Office of the Embassy of the PRC in Liberia, 2007b).

<sup>52</sup> The Chinese government, through its embassies, do not require Chinese citizens or Chinese owned (state or private) companies investing in Africa to register their presence, investments or interests. This means that the Chinese government does not hold definitive data on Chinese immigration to, or investments in, Africa generally or in Liberia in particular. Interview with Zhou Yuxiao, Chinese Ambassador to Liberia, Monrovia, November 20, 2009

<sup>53</sup> Author's observations during fieldwork visit in Monrovia, November, 2009.

<sup>54</sup> Interview with Chinese Construction company manager A, November 23, 2009.

<sup>55</sup> Interview with Chinese Construction company manager A, November 23, 2009.

In the case of its bilateral projects, Beijing overcomes inefficiencies and endemic corruption in Africa by not handing any money to African governments directly. Projects are decided with the relevant African government, and then all the project management – from tendering, the sourcing of materials and general management – is handled from Beijing through the Chinese embassy.<sup>56</sup> The construction of the new University of Liberia Fendall campus and the Tappita Hospital by the Guangdong Foreign Construction Co., the refurbishment of the SKD Sports Complex in Monrovia, and the construction and supply of medical equipment to the Tappita Hospital are examples of Chinese bilateral aid in Liberia (Embassy of PRC in Liberia, 2007). While evidently quicker in providing results on the ground and employing far fewer personnel compared to the Western aid industry, this model of aid does however suffer from the problem of a lack of skills transfer in terms of both labour and management skills. It also does not employ local sub-contractors and therefore limits the social-economic impact and creation of jobs that large infrastructural projects usually provide. It was noted that communication between the site foreman and local workers could be a problem with the Chinese model of operation in infrastructure projects. Regarding the widespread perception in Africa that Chinese firms carried out poor quality work in Monrovia, it is understood that the emergency road rehabilitation work in Monrovia was commissioned on a lower load specification and without drainage because of the limited funding provided by the World Bank. It was in fact the limited funding provided that led to lower specifications for roads and their quick deterioration, and not sub-standard Chinese workmanship.<sup>57</sup>

#### *Chinese participation in coordinated Peacebuilding in Liberia's Poverty Reduction Strategy*

The Liberian Reconstruction and Development Committee (LRDC) and the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs (MPEA) are responsible for the implementation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy. The Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) is the blue print for Liberia's post-war reconstruction and "articulate[s] the Government's overall vision and

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<sup>56</sup> Interview with Zhou Yuxiao, Chinese Ambassador to Liberia, Monrovia, November 20, 2009. Ambassador Zhou noted the Chinese approach as being more cost efficient compared to the western model.

<sup>57</sup> Interview with a Liberian civil engineer, Monrovia, Liberia, November 28, 2009.

major strategies for moving toward rapid, inclusive and sustainable growth and development during the period 2008-2011” (PRS, 2000: 13).

The PRS sets four pillars for Liberia’s reconstruction, namely: peace and security; economic revitalization; strengthening governance and rule of law; and rehabilitating infrastructure and delivering basic services. By examining the Chinese contribution to the four pillars, we can see the priority list for the Chinese as they emphasise infrastructure and poverty alleviation over and above governance and rule of law (table 8.9).

The Chinese contribution to Liberia’s PRS, in descending order of monetary contribution are:

- 1) Infrastructure rehabilitation and basic services provision,
- 2) Economic revitalization,
- 3) Peace and security,
- 4) with no contribution whatsoever from China, the governance and rule of law pillar.

**Chinese peacebuilding contributions to Liberia according to the four pillars of the PRS, 2006-2008 (\$ millions)**

<b>Order of contribution</b>	<b>Pillars of the PRS</b>	<b>Pledged</b>	<b>Dis-bursed</b>	<b>Balance</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Infrastructure and basic services</b>	68	41,6	26,4
<b>2</b>	<b>Economic revitalization</b>	14,2	14,2	0
<b>3</b>	<b>Peace and security</b>	6.2	6.2	0
<b>4</b>	<b>Governance and rule of law</b>	0	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	88,3	62	26,4

*Table 8.9 Chinese ambassador’s presentation to the LRDC on August 18, 2008. cited in African Centre for Economic Transformation, 2009: 19.*

**Chinese peacebuilding contribution in the infrastructure and basic services pillar (\$ millions)**



	<b>Project</b>	<b>Pledged</b>	<b>Disbursed</b>	<b>percent Disbursed</b>
1	Ministry of Foreign Affairs renovation	1,3	1,3	100
2	SKD stadium renovation	8,5	8,5	100
3	Farm tool donation	1	1	100
4	Anti-malaria drugs	0,3	0,3	100
5	Office materials	0,04	0,04	100
6	Training materials to Gender Ministry	0,03	0,03	100
7	Scholarships for Liberians	3,8	2,9	75
8	Technical training in China	5	4,3	86
9	School uniforms	0,1	0,1	100
10	Medical team to JFK Medical Centre	1	1	100
11	Chinese medical team residence	0,9	0,9	100
12	Agricultural team to Booker Washington Institute	0,8	0,8	100
13	Bamboo and rattan weaving	0,4	0,4	100

14	Liberia broadcasting station renovation and equipment	4,1	3,7	100
15	Malaria prevention	0,4	0,4	100
16	Construction at University of Liberia Fendell campus	21,5	10,8	50
17	Provision of labs to University of Liberia	0,5	0	0
18	Rural school construction	2,2	1,5	70
19	Hospital construction in Tappita	10,3	0,6	6
20	Central Agricultural Research Institute construction project	5,9	3,2	55
	<b>Total</b>	<b>68,1</b>	<b>41,8</b>	<b>61</b>

*Table 8.10 Chinese bilateral aid in infrastructure and basic services (does not include World Bank-funded projects carried out by Chinese contractors). Source: Chinese ambassador's presentation to the LRDC on August 18, 2008 cited in African Centre for Economic Transformation, 2009: 20.*

China does provide training to Liberians in the form of scholarships for Liberian students to study at Chinese universities. The PRC also provides shorter training courses for Liberian civil servants in Chinese universities. In addition, the Central Agriculture Research Institutes' rice planting demonstration project and the bamboo and rattan weaving project also provides basic skills training.

**Chinese approach to peacebuilding contribution in the Liberian economic revitalization pillar 2006-2008 (\$ millions)**

	Project name	Pledged	Disbursed	percent disbursed
1	Initial mineral resources survey in promising areas within Liberia	0,1	0,1	100
2	Cash donation as budget support (May 2006)	1,5	1,5	100
3	Cash donation as budget support (February 2007)	1,5	1,5	100
4	Debt cancelation (partial write off of debt matured before 2005)	14,2	14,2	100

*Table 8.11 Chinese contribution to Liberian economic revitalization, cited in African Centre for Economic Transformation, 2009: 20.*

According to the Henan (province) Development and Reform Commission, a mineral survey was conducted by the China Henan International Cooperation Group Co., Ltd in the Bomi

area (Henan Development and Reform Commission, 2011). Normally, China does not provide budgetary support as a part of its bilateral aid projects in Africa and prefers to deliver completed projects. However, it has provided budget support in both 2006 and 2007.

**Chinese approach to peacebuilding contribution in the peace and security pillar (\$ million)**

	<b>Project</b>	Pledged	Disbursed	percent Disbursed
1	Computers and communications equipment	N/A	N/A	N/A
2	Training for Liberian military and security officers in China	N/A	N/A	N/A
3	Camp Tubman Military Base in Gbarnga renovation	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Total		<b>6,2</b>	

*Table 8.12 Chinese contribution to the peace and security pillar, cited in African Centre for Economic Transformation, 2009: 19*

The first military attaché from the PRC to Liberia began his duties in May 2006. Between 2006 and 2010, 61 Liberian military officers have visited China for training and over US\$1,6 million of military material aid has been provided (Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Liberia, 2011).

**THE CHINESE APPROACH TO PEACEBUILDING IN COMPARATIVE CONTEXT** Comparative studies between the Chinese and a Western donor have only very

recently begun to appear (after fieldwork for this study was completed) and no comparative study on peacebuilding approaches exists besides the present study. Grimm, Hoss, Knappe, Siebold, Sperrfechter and Vogler of the German Development Institute examined and compared Chinese and German aid in Rwanda (Grimm *et al.*, 2010). Pollet, Huyse, Zhang, Shamba and Li from Catholic University Leuven in Brussels and the Institute of African Studies, Zhejiang Normal University in China respectively examined and compared Chinese and Belgian aid in the DR Congo (Pollet *et al.*, 2011). Grimm *et al.* examined German and Chinese aid activities in the agriculture, education, health and transport sectors (Grime *et al.*, 2010: 70-109). In Pollet *et al.*, the researchers examined and compared Chinese and Belgian aid in the fields of agriculture, road infrastructure, education, scholarship, health and security (Pollet *et al.*, 2011: 29-51). They found that, “the co-habitation of Western and Chinese donors in the DRC is not really problematic at this stage because both actors focus on different areas and themes, and their respective approaches are not working against each other” (Pollet *et al.*, 2011: xiv).

Like the two comparative studies of Chinese and Western aid in Rwanda and DR Congo, it was not possible to find exact data matches between the UK and the Chinese cases as there was no coordination in terms and definitions between the two governments. Also, where most Chinese infrastructure projects were completed by the time of the Chinese ambassador’s report to the LRDC in 2008; six of the 14 projects funded by the UK were still on-going and operational in 2012. Further, where Chinese projects were conducted singularly, the UK contributes to joint funds and projects. Given the variables between the two very different approaches, direct comparison and inferences drawn needs to be made with caution.

In terms of similarities, the UK was chosen because like the PRC, is a permanent member of the UNSC. In addition, the financial value of its contributions to Liberia’s peacebuilding is roughly comparable to that by the Chinese. However the nature and approach by the UK to peacebuilding in Liberia is very different when contrasted with the Chinese approach, for example, the UK does not contribute any personnel to UNMIL.

According to the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development (DFID), the UK’s peacebuilding budget in Liberia is broken down as follows (DFID, Liberia, 2012):

### Project Sector Groups participated by the UK in Liberia

Project sector	Number of projects
Health	4
Emergency response	2
Water and sanitation	2
Government and civil society	2
Peace and security	2
Other	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>14</b>

*Table 8.13 Source: DFID*

### Project participated by the UK in Liberia

	Project Title	Description	Status	Budget
1	Support to the Liberian health sector strategy	To improve on the necessary levels of funding to meet critical health sector needs during the post-conflict transition period.	Operational	£ 16,070,000
2	Liberia Reconstruction Programme	The Liberia Reconstruction Trust Fund was jointly established by the Government of Liberia and the World Bank to promote the Liberia Partners Forum held in June 2008. It is intended to be the	Operational	£15,000,000

		main mechanism for donor support for one of the country's highest priority needs – the rehabilitation of badly deteriorated roads and other major infrastructure.		
3	Multi-agency Response to Ivorian refugee crisis in Liberia	The UK will make an allocation of £8 million for humanitarian agencies to respond to the refugee crisis in Liberia.	Complete	£11,959,320
4	NGO health proposals – Liberia	To increase access to quality integrated primary and secondary health care services in Liberia.	Operational	£4,590,695
5	IDA Debt reduction Facility	Fund to finance Commercial Debt Reduction Program.	Operational	£3,600,000
6	NGO WATSAN Consortium	To provide medium-term transition support to the Government of Liberia and the Liberia Water and Sewer Corporation for the ongoing provision of Water and Sanitation facilities.	Complete	£3,500,001
7	Monrovia Water and Sanitation Rehabilitation Programme	To improve water and sanitation services in Monrovia and to improve the capacity of the Liberian water and sewerage corporation.	Operational	£2,908,000
8	Civil Service Capacity Building	To help to rebuild and improve the Liberian Civil Service's	Complete	£2,729,918

	Liberia	contributions to effective governance and service provision by strengthening the key institutions.		
9	Liberia security sector reform	Discernible positive changes in the malfunctioning of security sector institutions through effective implementation of the security sector strategy	Complete	£2,250,000
10	Office of Financial Management	To establish an Office of Financial Management within the Ministry of Health, Liberia to build capacity of their internal financial systems	Complete	£2,243,413
11	Landmine Action Agricultural Training Programme	To implement a comprehensive rehabilitation and training initiative of ex-combatants and their reintegration	Complete	£1,682,132
12	World Food Programme emergency assistance to Ivorian refugees and host populations in north-central and south-eastern Liberia: phase two	To provide school feeding for host communities and camps and general food in Liberia	Complete	£1,000,000
13	Support to	The capacity of the Ministry of	Operational	£605,704



	primary health care services in Liberia	Health in Liberia will be enhanced at community, county and national levels such that it can deliver the basic essential package of health care with less direct support from external agencies.		
14	Senior Advisor to the Minister of Finance	Appointment of Senior Advisor	Complete	£330,500

*Table 8.14 Source: DFID*

Between 2006 and 2008, China dispersed US\$62 million in Liberia. This is comparable to the UK's budget between 2008-2010 which was approximately £37 million (US\$59,48 million). The UK contributed to joint funds in the health sector, reconstruction sector, responded to a refugee crisis (refugees entering Liberia from Ivory Coast) and contributed the World Food Programme. The Chinese preferred to fund and complete its own programmes. DFID made contributions to infrastructure through its project on the provision of Water and Sanitation in Monrovia (it is not clear however, if British contractors/nationals carried out any construction projects). Also, both China and the UK were active in the health sector.

The major difference between the Chinese and the UK is that the UK actively contributed to governance by providing a senior advisor to the Minister of Finance, established an Office of Financial Management to build internal financial systems capacity within the Ministry of Health and helped with capacity building within the Liberian civil service. The Chinese did not contribute to governance capacity issues with advisors and on the ground capacity building. However, it provided training courses and scholarships to be undertaken in China for Liberian military officers, civil servants and university students.

The Chinese approach to peacebuilding and the liberal peace can be discerned and summarized as follows:

<b>Peacebuilding Issues</b>	<b>Liberal Peace</b>	<b>Chinese approach to peacebuilding</b>
<b>The goal of peacebuilding</b>	Liberal democracy and free market system	Economic development and poverty alleviation needs to be done before political / democratic reforms
<b>The focus of peacebuilding</b>	Good governance	Good government
<b>The principles of peacebuilding</b>	Democracy and human rights are universal values and take precedence over sovereignty	Principle of sovereignty takes precedence, values and interpretations of human rights can be different
<b>The strategic culture of peacebuilding</b>	Pre-emptive	Reactive
<b>The main ways of peacebuilding</b>	Top-down and bottom up, interaction between government and civil society amendments to the constitution, holding elections, establishing multi-party systems and strengthening civil society	Top down. Improve the legitimacy of the government and the functions of civil service. Enhance the effectiveness of the ruling party and government

*Table 8.15 (adopted from Zhao, 2011: 353; Saferworld, 2011: 81)*

## **CHINESE APPROACH TO PEACEBUILDINGKEEPING IN AFRICA**

The following provides context for Chinese participation in UNMIL. China participates in 11 United Nations Peacekeeping missions. Of these, six missions are in Africa. The non-African missions are: the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti; the UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus; the UN Interim Force in Lebanon; the UN Mission in Timor-Leste; and the UN Truce

Supervision Organization (United Nations, 2012). Details of Chinese African missions are as follows:

**Chinese participation in United Nations Peacekeeping Mission in Africa**

	<b>Mission</b>	<b>Initial authorization</b>	<b>Police</b>	<b>Experts</b>	<b>Contin gent troops</b>	<b>Total Number of current uniform personnel</b>
1	United Nations Organization Stabilization in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO)	November 30, 1999	0	16	218	19,055
2	United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)	September 19, 2003	17	2	564	8,962
3	United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO)	April 29, 1991	0	10	0	230
4	African Union / United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID)	July 31, 2007	0	0	323	21,493
5	United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI)	February 27, 2004	0	6	0	10,4000

6	United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS)	July 5, 2012	28	3	348	7, 099
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*Table 8.16 Source: UN Mission's Summary detailed by Country Month of Report: October 31, 2012.*

Beijing voted in favour of Security Council Resolution 1509 (2003) which authorized UNMIL and has sent peacekeepers to UNMIL since December 2003, consistently maintaining approximately 550-570 personnel. The Liberian mission is the largest of the Chinese missions anywhere in the world (564), followed by South Sudan (348) and Darfur (323). In Liberia, as is the case in all the larger Chinese peacebuilding missions elsewhere, the Chinese contingent provides transport, engineering and medical support to UN peacekeepers. In UNMIL, the Chinese transport unit consists of 240 peacekeepers, tasked with providing transportation and supplies for UNMIL operations. The engineering unit consists of approximately 275 peacekeepers and is stationed in the south-east of Liberia, in Zwedru, in UNMIL Sector Four. Its mission is the (re)construction of roads, bridges, UN camps and related basic infrastructure. The 43 person medical unit staff, a UN Level-2 field hospital is also in UNMIL Sector 4. In addition, there is a 25 person military police unit tasked with human resource management, police support, information collection, criminal investigation, traffic management, and emergency responses (UNMIL, 2011; *"Zhongguo Zhu Libiliya Dashi Lin Songtiantan Woweihed Budui"*, 2004). The Chinese also provide five military observers and nine staff officers to the UNMIL mission. Chinese peacekeepers are rotated every eight to ten months; by July 2011, China had contributed 6, 138 personnel (*Zhongguo Di Shiyi Pi Fu Libiliya Wehe Budui Huo Lianheguo Xunzhang*, 2011).

The nature of Chinese peacekeeping missions in larger African missions, consistently applied in Liberia, is that Chinese peacekeepers do not carry weapons and focus on the highly visible activities of constructing roads and infrastructure and providing logistical support to the main mission. This approach is consistent with the Chinese approach to

peacebuilding in that infrastructure reconstruction and poverty alleviation are viewed as priorities.

## **PERCEPTIONS OF THE CHINESE APPROACH TO PEACEBUILDING IN LIBERIA**

### *Perception of the Chinese approach to peacebuilding by international actors*

The perceptions of the Chinese approach to peacebuilding by INGOs, IFIs, and governmental aid organisations are mixed. An official at an international financial institution, with reference to its own good governance and capacity building programmes, pointed out that the Chinese model of management from Beijing was not building capacity in the Liberian government and therefore was unsustainable.<sup>58</sup> Managers at a Western government aid agency pointed out that the Chinese do not get involved with other international donors.<sup>59</sup> Another official at a Western government aid agency however conceded that it was noticing how much infrastructure was appreciated by everyday Liberians and was learning lessons from the Chinese model.<sup>60</sup>

### *Perceptions of the Chinese approach to peacebuilding by Liberians*

In a context where Liberians generally express dissatisfaction at the failure of the liberal peace to deliver tangible material improvements after establishing a fragile peace, the visible presence of Chinese construction is widely appreciated. But many interviewees in Monrovia said that they thought the Chinese engagement in Liberia was not benevolent. They felt that the Chinese are acting in self-interest and that, given Liberia's weak state and the history of colonialism in Africa, the balance of the benefit of Chinese engagement will probably go to the Chinese. However, despite the realistic assessment by Liberians, they generally appreciate the positive impact of Chinese-built infrastructure and how it is meeting the everyday needs of post-war Monrovia.<sup>61</sup>

Contrasting the Chinese workers with Westerners, a Liberian Journalist said,

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<sup>58</sup> Interview with International Financial Institution manager A, Monrovia, Liberia, November 23, 2009.

<sup>59</sup> Interview with Western government aid agency manager B, Monrovia, Liberia, November, 19 2009.

<sup>60</sup> Interview with Western government aid agency manager A, Monrovia, November 19, 2009.

<sup>61</sup> Interview with Liberian local NGO manger A, November 13, 2009

[the] Chinese man comes down to my level! He comes to my neighbourhood and hands out flyers for house renovations. A Westerner will never do this! And this is good, it encourages competition!<sup>62</sup>

A Liberian NGO manager observed that:

The Chinese are not for human rights and democracy... but infrastructure in Liberia is a problem and the Chinese are good at infrastructure... the Chinese work in the communities and interact with the people, and this is different from the standard Western aid workers.<sup>63</sup>

The observation that Chinese presence in post-war Liberia is focused on infrastructure and not on capacity building was an obvious and common observation by many interviewees. Both the Liberian government and civil society see their relationship with China as based on economic gain. A Liberian government official point out that Africa needs foreign direct investment and China needs resources. Specifically, Liberia needs direct foreign investment in infrastructure – a gap not filled by traditional Western donors and one that is filled by the Chinese.<sup>64</sup> Contrasting Western and Chinese engagement, it was pointed out that conditionalities imposed by the West meant that not enough infrastructure was being provided, that INGOs do not “pay regard to local reality” and that “we need to satisfy international whims”.<sup>65</sup>

The perception that the Chinese are more respectful of local conditions in Liberia and do not dictate terms is partially due to Chinese pragmatism and mainly due to the long-standing Chinese policy of non-interference in Africa. Relations with Africa were established by Beijing in the early 1960s, when the PRC’s international standing was precarious and it was at odds with both superpowers. In this context, China chose to establish its relationship with Africa as an equal partnership. Keen to articulate its identity

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<sup>62</sup> Interview with Liberian journalist A, Monrovia, Liberia, November 12, 2009.

<sup>63</sup> Interview with Liberian NGO manager A, Monrovia, Liberia, November 13, 2009

<sup>64</sup> Interview with Liberian foreign affairs official, Monrovia, Liberia, November 28, 2009.

<sup>65</sup> Interview with Liberian foreign affairs official, Monrovia, Liberia, November 28, 2009.

as different from the neo-colonial and imperialist powers of the West and the revisionist USSR, Beijing's discourse was built upon the Eight Principles of Foreign Aid. According to the Eight Principles, Chinese experts will work on equal terms with African experts; will never attach any conditions; and will focus on projects that offer quick results. As a fellow Third World country, China wanted to articulate an identity of equal partnership, accentuating its differences from the paternalism of the two superpowers and other Western colonial countries. In the 1980s, as China opened and reformed, it gradually adapted a state-led developmental model. This development model was infrastructure intensive and the infrastructure was financed by nature resource guaranteed loans from Japan (Bautigam, 2009). The Chinese model of engagement in Liberia – the “Chinese approach to peacebuilding” – is consistent with its traditional African policy as well as its own developmental experiences. China has provided highly visible infrastructures in the SKD Sports Complex; a new university campus; roads; and other high profile and useful infrastructure in and around Monrovia. Chinese peacekeepers attend to transport, engineering and medical needs. They perform highly visible activities that serve to illustrate the Chinese discourse that Chinese aid differs significantly from Western aid. Our interviews with Liberians in government and civil society show that the Chinese discourse of itself as a non-dictatorial partner, markedly different from the West, has been largely successful.

## **THE EVOLVING CHINESE UNDERSTANDING AND ATTITUDE TOWARDS INTERVENTION AND PEACEBUILDING IN LIBERIA**

The conflict in Liberia received some attention from Chinese Africanists (Wu, 2008). In a 2002 article, Zhang and Wu argue that ECOMOG's deployment did not violate the non-interference principle (2002: 37-38). Luo Jianbo, a PhD candidate at Peking University at the time, argued that the deployment of ECOMOG *was* problematic. He argued that, first, ECOMOG did not receive authorisation from the UNSC; second, it clearly interfered in the domestic affairs of Liberia and violated the principle of sovereignty; and third, it did not receive the consent of the belligerents (Luo, 2002).

In their 2009 article in *Wujing Xueyuan Xuebao* [the *Journal of Chinese People's Armed Police Force Academy*] Wang, who served in the UNMIL between July 2005 and 2006

as a military police officer, and Gao, a university lecturer, assessed the security situation in Liberia as follows:

Even though a new government is established, this has not solved the deep-seated social-economic problems. All the machinery of the state has been destroyed and the new regime cannot effectively change the culture of corruption, the lack of administrative capacity and the high crime rate. Local governments do not have the capacity and the central government does not have the reach to control crime(Wang and Gao, 2009: 30) (Author's translation)

They also observed that:

Liberia has 22 political parties with diverse political views. They compete viciously for control over limited political and economic resources and, as such, Liberia's peace is still fragile. It is predictable that UNMIL's presence, the mainstay of Liberian peace, will be needed for a long time(Wang and Gao, 2009:30) (Author's translation)

As these two excerpts show, Chinese peacekeepers who served in UNMIL have a fairly good grasp of the post-conflict situation. They recognise that social-economic problems underlie Liberia's civil war and continued insecurity. While they do not directly criticise the liberal peace, they recognize the fragility of the Liberian domestic situation. China and Chinese nationals are largely absent in UN-related agencies such as UNDP and the UN World Food Program, as well as other INGOs in Liberia. Regarding the Chinese engagement within UNMIL, the official Chinese position is that China participates while bearing in mind the principle of non-interference; that every context is different; and that the Chinese experience of development may not be appropriate in the Liberian or other African contexts.<sup>66</sup> However, the Chinese ambassador to Liberia was quick to emphasise that "non-interference does not mean being idle and doing nothing; nor does it mean China should be

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<sup>66</sup> Interview with Zhou Yuxiao, Chinese Ambassador to Liberia, Monrovia, November 20, 2009.



passive". In fact, the Chinese transport unit and engineering battalions are highly visible and play an active role, battling with often impassably muddy roads to keep the supply lines open.

On the question of non-engagement by China and the fact that no Chinese nationals work within international aid agencies and INGOs in Liberia, the Chinese ambassador in Liberia explained this in terms of the practical constraints of a lack of command of English and relative inexperience in peacebuilding projects. Beijing's decision to focus on infrastructure, transport and healthcare is, according to the ambassador, playing to China's traditional strength. The limited command of English by Chinese peacekeepers has been highlighted in articles written by Chinese UNMIL veterans of the Chinese military police, as well as by medical staff (Wang and Gao, 2009; Wang, Shi, Lu and Zhao, 2008). Given the increasing number of bright and highly skilled Chinese nationals who are fluent in English working for international firms in Shanghai, Beijing, London and New York, it is not very persuasive that lack of linguistic capacity is the sole reason for lack of Chinese participation in international projects

*Beijing's concerns on the International Criminal Court, Charles Taylor's Trial by the Special Court for Sierra Leone and Beijing's evolving attitude on sovereignty over human rights*

Charles Taylor was indicted by the prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone on Taylor on March 3, 2003 on 17 counts for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed during the conflict in Sierra Leone (The Hague Justice Portal, 2011). Examining the official Ministry of Foreign Affairs announcements, Beijing has not expressed any interest (positive or negative) in Charles Taylor's trial and later conviction and sentencing by the Special Court for Sierra Leone. Certainly, Charles Taylor is not a friend of Beijing. Beijing broke relations with Liberia in September 5, 1997 when Taylor recognized Two Chinas upon promises of aid from Taiwan. Taylor was not tried by the International Criminal Court but by the Special Court for Sierra Leone which was convened to try Taylor using the ICC's premises in The Hague.

It is interesting, however, to note Beijing's attitude towards the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court signed on July 17, 1998 at the United Nations Diplomatic Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Establishment of an International Criminal Court.

Beijing participated actively in the negotiations leading up to the Rome Statute but it was one of the seven countries to cast a vote against it (Lu and Wang, 2005: 609). According to Lu and Wang, the reasons China voted against the Rome Statute are:

1. Jurisdiction is not based on the principle of voluntary acceptance and complementarity gives the ICC the power to judge whether a state is able or willing to conduct proper trials for its nationals.
2. War crimes in internal conflicts also fall under the ICC's jurisdiction.
3. Crimes against humanity are prohibited in time of peace.
4. The inclusion of the crime of aggression within the jurisdiction of the ICC weakens the UN Security Council.
5. The *proprio motu* power of the Prosecutor may make the ICC open to political influence (Lu and Wang, 2005).

The primary concern for Beijing on the ICC is the encroachment of the principle of sovereignty and the prospect that officials in Beijing may be indicted for conducting its internal affairs. However, as Beijing's stance on the principle of sovereignty has been shifting in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century – evidenced by its increasing participation in non-traditional peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities. Liu Zhenmin, General Director of Treaties and Laws of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated in 2003 that the Chinese government, as an observer state, would continue to follow carefully the progress and operation of the ICC (cited by Lu and Wang, 2005: 620).

*Neopatrimonialism as a conceptual framework for Chinese understanding of conflict in Liberia?*

Neopatrimonialism is the dominant theoretical framework in understanding post-colonial African politics in Western scholarship (see chapter seven). However, this theoretical framework is unknown to the Chinese African studies epistemic community and policy makers. One reference to neopatrimonialism was made by a Chinese Africanist in a conference paper presented in 2011. Luo Jianbo, now at the International Institute for Strategic Studies of the Communist Party of China Central Committee Party School,

presented a conference paper titled: *Zhongguo Fazhan Jingyan Yu Zongfei Zhiguo Lizheng Jigyan Jialiu* [China's developmental experience and Sino-Africa exchange on governance experience] (Luo, 2011) at the First China-Africa Think Tanks Forum held in Hangzhou. Arguing that China and Africa can exchange developmental experience on the basis of equality and substantial development on South-South exchange can be had, Luo made reference to *xing shixi zhi* [neopatrimonialism] as a characteristic of African governance. Referring to the French Africanist Daniel Bach's book, *Neopatrimonialism in Africa and Beyond*, Luo wrote:

... some developmental countries' political systems exhibit classical characteristics of 'neopatrimonialism'. This means that political power has been monopolized and leveraged by leaders and their political groups, and the state interest has become the interest of a specific class, area or ethnic group. Political competition has evolved to become competition for interests and national politics have become the ground for private interest accumulation (Luo, 2011) (Author's translation).

In his conference paper, Luo recognized the difference between the Chinese state and neopatrimonial African states in that the Chinese ruling elite can stand neutral to different interests and has the ability to make and execute long-term plans for the entire country and not merely on behalf of the self-interest of a narrow elite. However, while Luo recognizes the characteristics of neopatrimonialism, he does not seem to highlight this to be a major issue for African governments nor does he see neopatrimonialism as a stumbling block in building an African developmental state. Beyond this single reference in a conference paper, no other Chinese Africanist writings referring to *xing shixi zhi* could be found.

#### *Beijing's attitude on conflict diamonds*

The Kimberly Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) for the international trade in rough diamonds is not a legally binding treaty between states, but a set of politically-binding minimum standards (Wright, 2004). There are two principles with regards to the KPCS. First, a Kimberly Process certificate is issued by the exporting government and attests that the consignment of rough diamonds has been handled in accordance with the KPCS.

Second, the participating government agrees that it will not trade in rough diamonds with non-participants.

During the Liberian Civil War, Charles Taylor's NPFL was able to tap in to logging and the diamond trade to sustain his warlord economy (Freeman, 2010; Reno, 1998: 97). UNITA in Angola was able to circumvent sanctions imposed by the UNSC by similar means. The Fowler Report (UN, 2000) was commissioned by the UNSC (Security Council Resolution 1237 (1999)) to investigate how the so-called 'conflict diamonds' or 'blood diamonds' were used by UNITA in Angola to overcome UNSC imposed sanctions. The report later gave rise to the Kimberly Process Certification Scheme (KPCS), expressly supported by UNSC Resolution 1459 and adopted unanimously on January 28, 2003, which tried to prevent conflict diamonds from entering the mainstream diamond market. China has been a member of all the KPCS working groups (Kimberly Process, PRC: 2012). China has been a member of the following working groups since establishment of the Process:

The Monitoring working group: 2003 - present

The Statistics working group: 2003 - present

Participation committee working group: 2003 - present

Rules and procedures working group: 2003 - present

Selection committee working group: 2003 - present

The KPCS Review: 2003 – present

China has been fully co-operative on the KPCS and this was corroborated by a joint announcement on *Xinhua News* by the State General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine; the General Administration of Customs; the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation; the State Economic and Trade Commission; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and the Ministry of Land and Resources, which stated that that they would implement the KPCS from January 1, 2003 (Xinhua, 2012).

## **CONCLUSION**

In her book discussing Chinese aid to Africa, Brautigam wrote,

China's aid and economic cooperation differ, both in their content and in the norms of aid practice. The content of Chinese assistance is considerably simpler, and it has changed far less often [compared to traditional Western aid]. Influenced mainly by their own experience of development and by the requests of recipient countries, the Chinese aid and economic cooperation programs emphasized infrastructure, production, and university scholarships at a time when the traditional donors downplayed all of these (Brautigam, 2009: 11).

This chapter's examination of the Chinese approach to peacebuilding in Liberia largely confirms Brautigam's description for Chinese aid in Africa generally. China, like other countries, provides aid for three reasons: strategic diplomacy, commercial benefits, and as a reflection of its values (Brautigam, 2009: 15). Through its bilateral aid projects and its multilateral engagements through its engineering, medical and transportation units, Beijing is successfully building a good relationship with the Liberian government; is opening new markets for its construction firms; and showcasing Chinese values of hard-work and respect for other cultures. In terms of China's normative perspective and soft power projection, China is particularly keen to project its developing world credentials by emphasizing by both word and deed that it is willing to work the more 'dirty jobs' as opposed to office posts in the capital. In this way, Beijing is emphasizing its value difference to the West.

Beijing's infrastructure-based aid and its efficient construction companies are certainly appreciated by Liberians. All things being equal, bridges, roads and schools should facilitate economic development. Beijing's 'hands-off' approach, whereby Liberians are allowed to decide for themselves instead of being tied down by conditionalities is calculated both to curry political favour with the Liberian elite and to emphasise the principle of non-interference. Given Beijing's African diplomacy has been, and still to some extent remains, in competition with Taipei for international legitimacy, it is practicing what it preaches. In other words, by not interfering in African domestic politics, Beijing is emphasising that it does not wish other countries to interfere in its own domestic politics – most importantly, the Taiwan Issue.

The Chinese approach to peacebuilding is grounded on China's own historical and economic experience. It does not seek to re-engineer a society after its own. Nor does it have an industry of aid workers working out the latest trends in assisting less developed countries. The Chinese approach has its roots in its aid programmes in Africa and reflects its current approach to development. While it has shortcomings in terms of skills transfer and capacity building, it is providing some desperately needed infrastructure (and the financing for it) in Liberia. While it may not, like any external actor, be able to solve all the problems, it has become an essential provider of infrastructure and expertise in Liberia.

## **CHAPTER NINE: CONCLUSION**

One of the most common discussions I have with Chinese people is how quickly things are changing in China. My Chinese friends and colleagues love to talk about how very different things are today compared to when they were growing up. When we discuss, and complain (too much) about, various aspects of Chinese life and society, my Chinese friends will often remind me about how much things have improved and changed compared to only a few years ago. When the topic of discussion is Chinese political and social life and the pace of reforms, my Chinese informers remind me that in so many ways Chinese society has already changed beyond recognition. Responding and adjusting to the rapid pace of change – and being caught out from time to time – has become a fact of Chinese life. In many ways, adjusting its stance on UNPKOs and its attitude to African security is but another change that the Chinese government has had to make.

China's emerging role as a peacekeeper, peacemaker and peacebuilder in Africa is significant and important. It is worth studying because it is beginning to, and will continue to, have a significant impact on the political, social and economic life of many people in Africa. A better understanding is needed of how Beijing views African insecurity, and what its role is in promoting security and promoting better practices of post-conflict peacekeeping and peacebuilding in Africa. This is essential for future engagements between African citizens, civil society and governments with the international peacekeeping and peacebuilding community.

This thesis is an explanatory account of China's emerging role as a peacemaker, peacekeeper and peacebuilder in Africa, using the Chinese participation in UNMIL as a case study. Given Beijing's traditional foreign policy identity as a Third World country, the PRC has had to struggle to come to terms with the rising expectation, from both the West and Africa, that it needs to play a part in providing diplomatic solutions and contribute to UNPKOs. The process of maturing from a Third World country to a core member of the UNSC – taking decisions on African security issues – has not been easy for Beijing. While there is still a great deal that China can, and ought, to do to promote peace and security in Africa, it has already improved in leap and bounds in supporting UNPKOs in Africa.

## **FINDINGS OF THIS THESIS**

The first original contribution this thesis makes is to the field of peace and conflict studies and, in particular, to the debate on the liberal peace in Africa. This is done by articulating and examining the Chinese approach to peacebuilding as a potential alternative to the liberal peace in Africa. Remaining true to Deng's 24 character instruction, Beijing continues to be very prudent in its foreign policy – keeping a low profile and not taking a leadership position. However, Chinese presence and influence in Africa is now so prominent and undeniable, and international expectations of China so great, that Beijing must steadily increase its participation in UNPKOs in Africa. However, Beijing is critical of the liberal peace and considers it to be liberal hubris. It sees enforcement of democratic reforms without grassroots support as unsustainable. Instead of the liberal peace, it favours poverty alleviation and economic growth as the long-term strategy to build sustainable peace. While China itself has followed the Asian developmental model, whereby the state maintains macroeconomic control and gradually allows free-market principles to work in the economy, it does not prescribe this formula for post-conflict African countries (such as Liberia). Fundamentally, the Chinese model is pragmatic; it is about 'crossing the river by feeling the stones'. As such, countries emerging from conflict must tailor their own social-economic policy according to the conditions it faces.

The second original contribution this thesis makes is the primary data collected in the form of interviews conducted in both China and Liberia. This primary data makes available to English-speaking scholars Chinese language texts on African security and UNPKOs. The Liberian fieldwork uncovers the *modus operandi* of the Chinese approach to peacebuilding in practice where the focus is on infrastructure rehabilitation. This is the case with regards to participation in multilateral UNPKOs as well as bilateral assistance. In the United Nations Mission in Liberia, Chinese blue helmets serve in engineering troops and transportation units tasked with rehabilitating roads, bridges and other primary infrastructure as well as providing transportation and logistics support for the UN mission. Chinese-funded bilateral assistance as well as World Bank-funded rehabilitation projects is carried out by Chinese construction firms. This focus on infrastructure rehabilitation has the advantage that it is highly visible and positively impacts on the daily lives of ordinary



people (according to the Eight Principles of Foreign Aid (see appendix)) and this means the Chinese presence is appreciated and welcomed by Liberians.

The third original contribution this thesis makes to the field of Chinese foreign policy analysis is in adapting a post-positivist methodology of discourse analysis in interpreting and analysing China's evolving policies on UNPKOs and African security. Beijing, and indeed any government, does not make its foreign policy in isolation. There is a very complex set of factors, ranging from the domestic to the international, and the historical to the social, which shapes a country's foreign policy. The task of a foreign policy analyst is to provide an explanatory account that balances simplicity with explanatory power. An account that is too complex and incorporates too many factors merely becomes description. The problem with descriptions of foreign policy is that it is impossible to decipher the important factors that contributed to policy change. Given that many prominent Chinese foreign policy analysts have pointed to China's identity struggle as it rises as the crux of the problem in understanding Chinese foreign policy, this thesis has aimed to understand China's policy on UNPKOs and African security, as well as the emerging Chinese approach to peacebuilding, in terms of China's identity struggle. By adapting Hansen's notions of basic discourse and representations of identity, the thesis has been able to provide an alternative interpretation of China's evolving African security policy from the current *ad hoc* descriptions and realist accounts. However, as was noted in the introduction of chapter three, this thesis is not an IR theory thesis and the objective of this thesis is not IR theory development or testing.

### **A 'CHINESE APPROACH TO PEACEBUILDING' FOR AFRICA?**

The strategic outlook from Beijing is that Africa is of instrumental geopolitical value in a Third World alliance against Western imperialism and hegemony; this was the case during the Cold War and remains so today (Luo, 2011; Taylor, 1998; Van Ness, 1993, 1998; Zhang 2007). As China begins to embark on a path to great power status, this traditional calculation is being encroached upon by Beijing's need to project an image of a responsible great power. The need to articulate a discourse of great power means that Beijing is increasing its engagement in UNPKOs as well as *ad hoc* participation in diplomatic negotiations on African security issues.

Beijing's international and security outlook, however, is still predominantly state-centric and it remains central for it to cultivate and maintain good bilateral relations with individual African countries, as well as (sub) regional organisations. With no former colonial ties, no large expatriate community, no domestic civil society lobby, and no religious groups with transnational ties, Beijing is not subject to the same urgency or domestic pressure to act that London or Paris experiences when there is unrest in Africa. However, the uprising in Libya in 2011 has begun to change the traditional perception that China does not have a direct security stake in Africa.<sup>67</sup>

Taking a state-centric view, Beijing's understanding of African issues is mediated through African elites. As well, Beijing understands African insecurity as a direct result of weak states and that the states are weak mainly because of colonialism, tribal conflicts, or enforced democratisation. In addition to the regional politics within the African continent, Beijing is also aware that the US and other ex-colonial powers consider African countries as within their sphere of interest. This is especially true in the case of France and Britain. These being fellow UNSC permanent members and core countries of the West, Beijing does not wish to challenge these two status-quo powers. Doing so would immediately raise the 'China as a rising threat' issue, something Beijing has worked very hard to downplay.

For Beijing, involvement in African security, such as the Darfur issue, must be balanced among many demands. There is the tension between the principle of sovereignty, on the one hand, and the need to demonstrate its credentials as a peaceful rising great power, on the other. There is the need to maintain good bilateral relations with African governments as well as with Western-dominated international organisations. And while China needs to show good faith through increased participation in UNPKOs in Africa, it is well aware that too much participation will raise the suspicion of the *status quo* states.

Regarding the debate on African peace and security studies, Beijing is not alone in assessing that the liberal peace project is unlikely to succeed in Africa. Some Western scholars point out that the liberal peace is unlikely to succeed because it directly challenges a pre-existing, neopatrimonial governing structure where a Big Man rules through his patron-client relationships (Taylor, 2007a: 563). From Beijing's perspective, a society's

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<sup>67</sup> Email correspondence with Beijing academic, June 29, 2011.

mode of production will naturally give rise to a governing superstructure. Democratic systems of government developed in the West over hundreds of years are grounded in Western society, culture and history. Forcibly implanting this system in countries with pre-existing governing systems tends to result only in a “virtual peace” – consisting of superficial democratic institutions without substantive grassroots support (Richmond and Franks, 2007). The Chinese approach to peacebuilding draws on the PRC’s own developmental experiences of the 1980s and 1990s and focuses on modernising the means of production through natural resources-backed financing (Brautigam, 2009). This is different to imposing a ruling superstructure, as the liberal peace attempts to do. Perhaps due to China’s own traumatic experiences of restructuring its society in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the Chinese are less than eager to participate in the reengineering of a society’s governing superstructures through the liberal peace project. Of course, Beijing’s reluctance to participate in the liberal peace is also due to its being an autocratic regime. Nonetheless, Beijing and critics of the liberal peace project agree that only a virtual peace is built when a democratic system is imposed from the outside and economic conditions are not improved.

As Chinese investments in Africa surpass those of traditional colonial powers, factors that motivate Western powers to intervene and protect their interests in Africa have also become relevant for Beijing. In Africa, it is no longer possible for Beijing to declare that ‘business is business’ and that it does not get involved in politics (French, 2004).

Beijing’s state-centric perspective on courting African elites means it does not recognise the societal divisions and neopatrimonial nature of most African societies. Given the neopatrimonial nature of African states, income from natural resources tends to flow to ruling elites and their neopatrimonial networks. Overwhelmingly dependent on exporting natural resources, many African countries are susceptible to the resource curse (Ross, 1999). Chinese investments in the natural resource sector arguably help to sustain unpopular regimes and contribute to the resource curse. However, there is a great reluctance by the Chinese government and academics to recognise that its resource investments may have adverse affects on stability in Africa. Chinese academics are of the view that the resource boom in resource-rich African countries (a result of Chinese demand) is a positive that greatly outweighs the associated negatives. With reference to corruption

in its own society, Chinese academics (and the policy makers they advise) are satisfied that corruption and other ills fuelled by Chinese investments in Africa are a normal part of the growing-pains of economic development and that the positives will eventually outweigh the negatives.<sup>68</sup>

With reference to an Asian developmental model (an authoritarian state-led macro-economic planning), Beijing understands interstate insecurity in Africa are largely a result of a weak state. Weak states in Africa are a result of tribal conflict, incomplete processes of nation building, and neo-colonial interference by neo-colonial powers (Li, 2006). While the two Chinese ambassadors interviewed by the author were at pains to emphasise that China has limited experience and capacity in contributing to peacebuilding in Africa and that it is not opposed to the liberal peace, the impression one receives from surveying Chinese publications is that Western-led engagement in Africa is neo-colonial and that China's emphasis on win-win partnerships is better appreciated in Africa (Pan, 2008).

Finally, there are two opposing demands in China's African security policy formulation: that China is a developing country and needs to stand in partnership with the nations of the South, and that China is a great power (breaking out of the Third World club) and needs to shoulder some responsibility in maintaining the international order. On the one hand, African states are China's traditional allies against great power interference and there is mutual interest in emphasising the principle of sovereignty and non-interference. On the other hand, China's rapidly growing economic stake in Africa means its interest is that of a great power – needing to protect its investments and interests in Africa. As Chinese interest and influence grow in Africa, it is becoming increasingly difficult for China to play both roles at the same time. At present, the tendency is for China to continue to emphasise its traditional friendship and equality, while engaging with Africa as a great power. For instance, Beijing has demonstrated competency in a demanding and delicate African context by persuading Khartoum to accept an UN-AU hybrid force in Darfur (Holslag, 2008). However, this success needs to be qualified, for Beijing had a special relationship with Khartoum due to its oil investments and it played the role of messenger for both the AU and the UNSC. In other words, the Darfur case was unique and Beijing has

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<sup>68</sup>Author's interview with a Chinese African studies academic, Beijing, China, July 20, 2010.

little political leverage over the vast majority of African states, despite its economic presence. As China's direct investment, and thus risk exposure, increases in Africa, it can be expected that it will take a greater interest in African security and in providing support for, and even participating in, peace negotiations, and finding political solutions to Africa's conflicts.

Beijing's desire for the leadership position of the South means that we can expect increasing participation in diplomatic negotiations and increasing support for peacekeeping operations led by the UN, the AU and sub-regional organisations (such as ECOWAS). In the context of China's pursuing a multi-polar world order, increasing numbers of Chinese blue helmets should not be interpreted as Beijing having embraced or accepted the liberal peace framework in Africa. In the same way that Chinese aid and investment have both competed with and complemented traditional investment and aid in Africa, the Chinese approach to peacebuilding – with its focus on infrastructure reconstruction and the developmental state, with modifications and indigenisation, may challenge and complement the liberal peace for the better.

## APPENDICIES

### APPENDIX ONE: RESEARCH NOTES

#### *Defining the Chinese approach to Peacebuilding*

The scope of this research focuses on the emerging Chinese approach to peacebuilding engagement in Liberia. Peacebuilding refers to “action undertaken at the end of a civil conflict to consolidate peace and prevent a recurrence of fighting” (Paris 2004: 38). While participation in road construction by Chinese peacekeepers undoubtedly qualifies as a part of Chinese peacebuilding, it becomes more difficult to establish if Chinese construction of the new Liberian University campus or China Union’s investment in the Bong Iron Ore Mine can be regarded as (or can be regarded from the Chinese perspective as) “action undertaken at the end of a civil conflict to consolidate peace and prevent a recurrence of fighting”.

Indeed the notion of ‘peacebuilding’ as understood by Paris is likely to be foreign to Chinese nationals engaged in peacekeeping, aid, reconstruction and investment activities in Liberia. China Union’s investment in the Bong Iron Ore Mine is especially problematic. On the one hand, it will certainly create jobs (although modern mining is capital rather than labour intensive) and once production begins, iron ore mining should (again) become the major income stream for Liberia. On the other hand, given how weak states such as Liberia are characterized by neopatrimonialism and are very susceptible to the resource curse, and given how the illicit diamond and timber trade sustained the Liberian civil war (Reno, 1998), it may be argued that the iron ore mining and infrastructure construction surrounding it as well as any further exploitation of nature resources may actually feed the neopatrimonial elite, prove to be an impediment to sustainable peace, and fuel further conflict in the future.

Given this is the first research project on the Chinese approach to peacebuilding engagement in Africa and in Liberia in particular, an ‘as generous as possible’ interpretation on what constitutes Chinese approach to peacebuilding was adopted. First, for the reasons of practicability and with the intention to facilitate future research, it is better to begin by being inclusive, err on the side of caution and include more rather than

less Chinese activities. Secondly, given that the expressed intention by the Chinese on peacebuilding is to alleviate poverty and stimulate economic activity, Chinese state-backed projects (excluding purely private investment such as stores and hotels established by individual Chinese entrepreneurs) which directly stimulate economic activity are accepted as a part of Chinese approach to peacebuilding engagement in Liberia for the purpose of data collection.

Issues of definition and categorization are perhaps the bane of researchers. Subsequent to conducting the Liberia fieldwork in November 2009, other researchers have noted their own difficulties in grappling with similar questions on Chinese aid to Africa. On a research project on Chinese and Belgium aid activities in the DR Congo published in 2011 by Brussels' Katholic University Leuven (Pollet, Huyse, Zhang, Shomba and Li), researchers from China and Belgium also found it challenging to categorize Chinese activities. First, they struggled with what constituted aid, given the different conceptions of aid from the West and the Chinese. Second, given the Chinese approach in engaging in Africa, it was difficult to differentiating Chinese "aid projects" in the DR Congo from Chinese "trade and investment projects" (Pollet, Huyse, Zhang, Shomba and Li, 2011: 7).

The problems of definition and categorization mean that this research into the Chinese approach to peacebuilding in practice in Liberia is not merely descriptive and quantitative (what, when, where, budget). Just as importantly, it examines, analyses and constructs what the Chinese approach to peacebuilding is. It examines the perception and attitudes of both Liberians (government and civil society) and internationals (Western diplomats, NGOs and IOs) towards this emergent and perhaps alternative approach to liberal peacebuilding. As can be seen above, in choosing the subject of research (Chinese state directed engagement in post-conflict Liberia) and in selecting and categorizing what constitutes a Chinese approach to peacebuilding projects (excluding purely private investments) value judgements and interpretations are inevitable.

#### *Why Liberia was chosen for this study*

First, the largest Chinese contingent of UN peacekeepers anywhere in the world is stationed in UNMIL. Secondly, this small West African country has vacillated between Taipei and Beijing twice, being subject to 'chequebook diplomacy' between Beijing and

Taipei, makes Liberia an excellent subject to study Chinese peacebuilding and Chinese projection of power in Liberia.

*Qualitative research approach adopted by this research*

Terre Blanche, Kelly and Durrheim point out that “quantitative research makes sense in situations where we know in advance what the important variable are, and are able to devise reasonable ways of controlling or measuring them” (Terre Blanche, Kelly and Durrheim 2006: 272). They argue that in situations where it is difficult to say what the variables are, which ones are important and how one is to measure them, “we need to engage in the kind of open-ended, inductive exploration made possible by qualitative research” (Terre Blanche, Kelly and Durrheim 2006: 272). Whereas a quantitative researcher will enter the research with a theoretical framework and hypothesis for testing, the lack of pre-existing understanding means that qualitative researchers need first ‘immerse’ themselves in the data and try to appreciate inherent patterns instead of entering the field and try to “impose preconceived ideas on the data” (Bryman and Bell 2007: 407).

This was the first research project into the Chinese peacekeeping/peacebuilding in Liberia (and as far as I am aware, in Africa). The almost complete lack of pre-existing understanding of the Chinese in post-conflict Liberia means that a positivist scientific research approach was neither possible nor desirable.

In conducting qualitative approach where the study cannot be controlled as in a scientific experiment, there are two perspectives, namely: common sense perspective and interpretive perspective. The common sense perspective on qualitative research is essentially a positivist perspective (Terre Blanche, Kelly and Durrheim, 2006: 273). From a positivist epistemological perspective, while it may be impossible, the researcher should ultimately strive to the same standards of reliability and validity and quantitative research. Therefore, sources of subjectivity and bias should be controlled if not eliminated altogether and if this cannot be achieved, then the researcher should admit her work is less reliable and scientific. Ontologically, this common sense perspective postulates an independently existing objective truth. The task of the researcher is to uncover this truth. In conducting qualitative interviews, variables such as the interviewer’s power position vis-à-vis the



interviewee with regards to language, class, race, and profession should be taken into account. In other words, from the common sense perspective, an objective answer is theoretically possible and bias should, as far as possible, be eliminated. From this perspective, if the interviewer appears to be Chinese (as is the case with the author) and he poses the question to the interviewee on whether he appreciates Chinese businessmen in Liberia, an objective answer from the interviewee may not be forthcoming – and this bias needs to be controlled (the same concern, however about bias can be raised if the interviewer was a white man or woman, black man or woman).

That research can be value free and not carry vested power interests of the dominant, hegemonic framework of thinking are challenged by feminist and black scholarship (Eagle, Hayes and Sibanda, 2006). Critical researchers take social science research that purports to be value-free to task. They point out that the subjective experiences of marginalised groups in society – women blacks (minority groups) – are ignored and neglected when research purports to be value neutral.

According to Terre Blanche, Kelly and Durrheim, the interpretative paradigm:

“involves taking people’s subjective experiences seriously as the essence of what is real for them (ontology), making sense of people’s experiences by interacting with them and listening carefully to what they tell us (epistemology), and making use of qualitative research techniques to collect and analyse information (methodology). Thus the interpretive approach does not focus on isolating and controlling variables, but on harnessing and extending the power of ordinary language and expression to help us understand the social world we live in” (2006: 273-4).

The interpretive perspective of qualitative research is a post-positivist approach and is consistent with the overall ontological and epistemological position of this thesis (see chapter three). The researcher concedes that an objective answer is not possible (on how a Liberian citizen perceives the Chinese engagement in his country, for example) and does not focus on isolating and controlling variables. Rather, he focuses on ordinary language and expression in order to comprehend how the interviewees understand their world.

While the interpretive perspective is not scientific and does not seek to uncover an 'objective truth', this does not mean that there are no principles, skills and techniques that the researcher will use. Primarily, the research involves 'understanding in context' where the researcher is the 'primary instrument' as he collects and analyses data. While feminist and black scholarships are rightly critical of positivist assumptions in social science, they are also critical of the interpretive perspective arguing that they lack the political commitment to champion change for the marginalised groups (Eagle, Hayes and Sibanda, 2006). If it is the case that the researcher uncovers and understands the injustices faced by the marginalised groups, then they ought to challenge vested power interests. From this perspective, "research is viewed as a tool through which to effect change" (Eagle, Hayes and Sibanda, 2006: 501). This thesis, taking a post-structural approach, is sympathetic to this perspective.

## **REFLEXIVITY**

Feminist and black social scientists recognise the shared human attributes of the researcher and the subject. For example, feminists take the perspective that the researcher is not and cannot be independent from the subject of the research and recognising that the researcher's demographic and personal characteristics will play a part in the interview and the research process, it is important that commentary on the subjective response to the research process is provided (Harding, 1987). Black scholarship recognises the history of colonial agenda in past research and notes that in the past research into black populations was seen as unproblematic as black subjects were judged according to supposedly 'objective' white standards (Said, 1991). As such, objectivity is but the structural assertion of the more powerful colonizer. For example, Patterson points out that early 19<sup>th</sup> Century science observed and generated data that proved the black race had evolved separately as an unequal species (Patterson, 1979 noted in Eagle, Hayes and Sibanda, 2006). Black scholarship is therefore critical and opposed to the notion of 'scientific objectivity' and determinism. Given the history of colonial practices in Africa, it is especially important that researchers do not impose standards of their own academic research culture as 'objective' and be sensitive to and show due respect for the context and representations made by the interviewees.

The fieldwork was carried out in Liberia between November 9 to November 30, 2009. Between November 9 and November 18, Julian Graef, a fellow PhD student, and three other members of the CPCS travelled and conducted interviews with me. Between November 18 to 24, Prof. Ian Taylor, Prof. Oliver Richmond and Patrick Tom (PhD candidate) from the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, School of International Relations, University of St. Andrews joined me and Julian Graef, forming a five man research team. Between November 25 and 30, I remained alone in Monrovia to conduct further research and follow up with existing contacts.

Of the five researchers in the team, Ian Taylor and I were primarily interested in the Chinese engagement in Liberia. Oliver Richmond and Julian Graef were interested in the problems facing the liberal peace and grassroots resistance. Patrick Tom was interested in indigenous African sources of peacebuilding.

Julian Graef and I arrived in Monrovia on November 9 and orientated ourselves in Monrovia, conducted interviews already arranged via email and begun to make appointments and arrangements for interviews in anticipation of the arrival of the remainder of the research team. Unique to fieldwork research in post-conflict research, we were not attached to the UNMIL, any international organizations or aid agencies and made no use of gatekeepers in finding interviewees. This had the result that the first few days in Monrovia were quite tense as we moved about Monrovia and slowly familiarized ourselves with the city. However, after a few days and especially after completing the first couple of interviews that were arranged prior to departure, we established that the Monroviaans are generally friendly and helpful. Had we been attached to an aid or a UN agency (which is normally the case), and been required to be briefed by their safety and security and have the agency act as a gatekeeper, we would likely have viewed Liberia differently.

From my perspective, it was important that the Liberian interviewees felt respected in their own space, that they felt that we were asking questions in good faith and they felt that their time speaking to researchers would in a small way lead to a positive outcome. In trying to build up a good rapport, I normally prefaced my first question by first admitting my ignorance of the subject (on Liberia, the civil war, UNMIL and the Chinese engagement) and asked the interviewee to assist me with their opinions and judgments. With regards to formal Chinese interviewees (the Chinese ambassador and a manager), the interviews were

conducted in English as I was the only person in the research team that spoke Mandarin and our Chinese interviewees were relatively fluent in English. With regards to international aid workers we interviewed, the position we adapted was that of fellow civil society as university researchers from the UK. Instead of being passive note-takers trying to test potential hypothesis, I tried to engage in discussions with the interviewees around the issue of liberal peace in Liberia and the emergent Chinese engagement and tried to learn their insights.

## **POSITIONALITY**

Hardy *et al.* point out that “the value of researchers can never be eradicated from their work and no amount of methodological technique or declaration of bias can strip them of their theoretical bias presuppositions” (Hardy *et al.*, 2001: 534). It is therefore important that positionality and power relations between the researcher and interviewee be described. It is normally the case that researchers from the West hold a power advantage over their African interviewees. This can either be because the interviews are arranged by gatekeepers such as international NGOs upon whom interviewees depend for aid, or that interviewees hope to gain favours and resources from the researcher. Researchers (especially those from the West) often come from positions of considerable privilege in relation to members of host populations and are privy to numerous cultural and social benefits. The author is a male South African with Taiwanese ancestry. Julian Graef is a Caucasian American male. The two professors, Ian Taylor and Oliver Richmond are Caucasian British males and Patrick Tom is black African Zimbabwean. Besides the interview with the Chinese construction manager (which was arranged by the Chinese embassy), none of the other interviewees were arranged through gatekeepers. While we were able to rely on interviewees to refer us to other interviewees, the new interviewees were not beholden to us as an employee of an NGO might be if the NGO office (gatekeeper) referred us to the employee.

However, it was inevitable that power relations were at play during the interview process. As we were not ‘embedded’ with the UNMIL or any NGOs and we confined our interviews to Monrovia elites, the power gap between ourselves and Liberian elites was not normally great, nor was I (we) able to command much power over our interviewees.

For example, I was told to return at another time or told to fetch letters of introduction on numerous occasions. Having no access to luxury 4x4s which is the normal mode of transport of international aid workers in Liberia meant that we often arrived at the interviewees' office on foot (and visibly sweating from the effort). Identifying ourselves as a PhD candidates often meant that the power relations between myself, Graef and the interviewees resembled that of any PhD student asking for an interview at any Western capital – in other words, the power relations were not normally in our favour.

When the research team was five strong, consisting of two professors and three PhD candidates, the power relations between the researchers and interviewees shifted in the researchers' favour. With a full contingent of five researchers, the younger international aid workers were noticeably keen to impress the researchers. This was because the professors represented opportunities to pursue further studies and scholarship at a renowned British university. More than one international aid worker volunteered for further social meetings and offered contacts to the professors. This did not happen when the professors were not present.

## **DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES**

Data collection consisted of desktop documentary reviews of existing published data on Chinese activities in English and in Chinese as well as semi-structured interviews conducted with elite interviewees in Monrovia. On documentary review, the website of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Liberia, the website of the PRC's Ministry of Commerce, the website of UNMIL, Chinese news and academic publications as well as Liberian and other English language news websites were the main source of information on Chinese activities in Liberia. The process of documentary review was on-going throughout the length of this project. On fieldwork interviews conducted in Liberia, this was the first fieldwork-based research into Chinese engagement in Liberia in either Chinese or English. Formal, semi-structured interviews were arranged and conducted with Monrovia elites, consisting of Liberian government officials, newspaper editors, diplomatic community and international organization workers.

## **RELIABILITY OF DESKTOP DATA COLLECTED**

The difficulty of data collection on Chinese investments and trade in Liberia cannot be overemphasised. On the one hand, the Chinese do not provide systematic and audited data. On the other hand, the conflict in Liberia and the Liberian state's lack of capacity means that little verifiable official trade data is available.

On gathering data on Chinese aid in Africa, Deborah Brautigam, a leading scholar on this topic noted that:

"The Chinese aid program is frequently portrayed as enormous and secretive. It is true that China has proposed very large loan packages in a small number of African countries (as well as smaller packages in nearly every other country), but most of what is on offer is not official development assistance, as this is defined by the traditional donors. Transparency about aid figures remains low, but it is not impossible to find information" (Brautigam, 2009: 164).

Making a related comment on Chinese aid in Africa generally, Grimm *et al.* noted that:

"There is much debate (and speculation) on the levels and targets of Chinese foreign assistance and investment, but little systematic assessment of what information is available. The often referred to lack of information on Chinese aid flows makes it difficult to accurately monitor or evaluate the impact of its foreign assistance"(Grimm *et al.*, 2011: 3).

Grimm *et al.* further comment on the Chinese provision of data on aid in Africa that, "[s]ensitivity exists particularly around data broken down to specific country level. Although this data must surely be available within the Chinese administration, it is not made available publically; at least not systematically" (Grimm *et al.*, 2010: 4).

My own research confirms the assessments by Brautigam and Grimm *et al.* First, there is the problem of definition. What exactly count as aid? And for the purpose of this research, as peacebuilding? Secondly, while data is available for the persistent researcher, it is on an *ad hoc*, non-systematic basis that is not independently verifiable. Given that the Chinese do not define aid in the same sense that traditional donors do, and indeed find aid

to be a sensitive topic, it is very difficult to gather reliable information and, once the information is stitched together — to make comparisons.

The Chinese embassy in Liberia is the official source of information on Chinese-funded projects in Liberia. Chinese media also provides regular reports on Chinese aid projects throughout Africa and in Liberia. Chinese media reports are normally provided by China Central Television or Xinhua news agency. Chinese media also syndicate official news briefs from a relevant Chinese ministry; for example the Ministry of Defence on peacekeeper deployment or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on diplomatic visits or aid projects (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009; Ministry of National Defence of the PRC, 2012). However, this Chinese provision of information is not objective and always casts a positive light on Chinese projects.

Liberian newspapers also report Chinese activities in their country (Johnson, 2011; Kamara, 2012) and they provide an independent assessment. The official UNMIL website also provides regular updates of Chinese projects and deployments, however, this is also largely informative and without critical assessments.

## **HOW THE FIELDWORK UNFOLDED**

In addition to documentary review which has been on-going throughout the duration of the research; preparation for the fieldwork to Liberia began in October 2009. The research project is a part of the Tensions and Contradictions in the Liberal Peace in Africa Project hosted by the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies (CPCS) based at the School of International Relations, University of St. Andrews. Funding was secured by Ian Taylor from the Allen and Nesta Ferguson Charitable Trust Scholarship for Sub-Saharan Africa Peace Studies (UK). In addition to completing the ethics forms and risk assessments required by the School of International Relations prior to departure, October and September 2009 consisted of inquiring within the author's professional and personal networks on identifying potential interviewees as well as gathering information about the Liberian attitude towards the Chinese. This attempt to gather information was met with general ignorance. When opinions were ventured, it was that the Chinese were not welcomed and disliked by Liberians. Email invitations identifying the researcher, the topic and time of visit were sent out during October to UNMIL, local and international aid agencies, Liberian

newspapers, as well as IOs such as UNDP, World Bank and the IMF. Emails were also sent to the Chinese embassy in Liberia. Three interviews were confirmed by email prior to entering the field, all of whom were from local Liberian civil society from an democracy NGO, a newspaper, and an international NGO.

Given this was the first research project into the Chinese engagement in Liberia, the rational for choosing interviewees was to arrange as many interviews with as broad a range of Liberian, Chinese and international elites in Monrovia as possible with a view of gaining as broad as possible understanding of the Chinese engagement and how it is received in Liberia. Prior to entering the field, there was no information on what the different newspapers' political affiliations were and no information on what were the underlying political dynamics between civil society, government, the opposition, Western NGOs and the Chinese contingent.

The interviewees were identified and contacted in the following ways.

1. We interviewed the three existing interviews already set up through email and asked at the conclusion of the interview for further information and suggestions for further interviewees to contact.
2. We contacted potential contacts that did not reply to our email invitations again telephonically.
3. We purchased newspapers from the street and called editors of newspapers requesting interviews. We already had a sense of the political inclinations of the newspapers as many of them had online versions.
4. We visited the University of Liberia on foot and were led by students to academics of the Kofi Anan Centre for Conflict Transformation, the Confucius Institute and the Political Studies Department. (We were aware of these centres but were not able to acquire contact information due to poorly maintained websites prior to departure).
5. A formal letter of introduction was furnished by Ian Taylor identifying himself as an adjunct professor at Renmin University. This letter was presented to the Chinese embassy in Liberia and an interview with the ambassador was arranged.



6. Once all the members of the research team from the CPCS arrived, everyone pooled their contacts and more interviews were arranged telephonically.

## **THE INTERVIEW PROCESS**

The interviews were semi-structured. Given there is no literature on how the Liberians understood the Chinese besides official reports of good relations, I tried to enter the interviews with an open mind and without preconceived judgements. Interviews were normally arranged by telephone and we would ask where it would be most convenient for us to conduct the interview with the result that we met the majority of the interviewees in their offices. This was inevitably the case with international NGOs, IOs, IFI, and diplomatic and government officials as they had air-conditioned offices. Our invitation to the Chinese embassy was met with an almost two hour long discussion with the Chinese ambassador at the official guest lounge of the Chinese embassy. A similar attempt at the US embassy led to an official spending forty-five minutes with us in a cramped office.

At the beginning of the interview we will introduce ourselves as university researchers with the purpose of the visit to discuss the peacebuilding process and the Chinese engagement in Liberia. Where relevant, we will mention our mutual contact that refereed us to them and indicate that we were interested in their perspective on the peacebuilding process in Liberia. Context and culture dependent, we might begin the interview with some pleasantries and normally at the indication of the interviewee, we will begin with our set of questions. My own round of questions always focused on the interviewee's personal opinion and assessments on Chinese activities generally and their position on the peacebuilding process in particular.

As far as power relations are concerned between the interviewee and interviewer, where the interviews were conducted with one or two interviewers, the power relation leaned towards the interviewee as he sat in his office at a time convenient to him (we often only secured the interview with two or more visits) and he spoke about his domain to note-taking researchers. In my observation, as we conducted more interviews and became more confident in both our understanding of the Liberian situation as well as our surroundings, we were able increasingly ask better and more relevant questions and engage in better discussions. Our interviews with local newspaper editors for example, fit the description of

older men confident in their domain 'teaching' novice researchers. When we (Julian Graef and I) visited the University of Liberia, we were able to engage with professors in academic discussions and debate about the context, history advantages and shortcomings of the liberal peace in Liberia. In our discussions with one professor, my initial disagreement with him about the potential applicability of a Chinese model of development in Liberia seemed to have triggered his academic interest and we had a good-natured debate and robust exchange of views on the subject. To be sure, we were in the interviewees' offices to gain their insight into the peacebuilding situation and the Chinese role in this, this intention from us was expressed explicitly at the outset of every interview. However, we were not passive note-takers working from a list of pre-written questions. Depending on how forthcoming the interviewee was, after the first two or three open ended questions where we asked almost every interviewee about the state of Liberia, the prospect of sustainable peace after UNMIL drawdown and their opinion on Chinese newcomers (and to the Chinese, how they think they are being perceived), the line of questions tended to pick up what the interviewee had said and try to have them elaborate on their positions.

Elite interviews were conducted due to the assumption (which is of course problematic) that elites are better acquainted with the subject of the Chinese in peacebuilding activities and the limitations of time and ability to travel. The interviewees were elites of Monrovia local and international society where a tertiary qualification (or equivalent experience) will be necessary for the professional jobs they held. This included Liberian government officials, international and local civil society staff, staff of international organizations, as well as the Chinese ambassador and the Chinese construction company manager. In speaking to these elites, my opinion is that the questions we posed, the answers given and subsequent discussions that ensued were a good way for me to gain better understanding of both the opinions held, as well as to why these opinions were held.

While in Monrovia, I spoke to everyone from security guards to taxi drivers to fellow taxi passengers and diners in cafés. This everyday interaction with everyday people greatly sharpened my understanding of popular perceptions on Liberia's peacebuilding process and their perception of the Chinese engagement. Given the state of almost non-

existent knowledge on the Chinese in Liberia, it would have been quite impossible to draft a list of well-informed questions on the Chinese activities and how they were perceived.

## **POST-INTERVIEW PROCESSES: DISCUSSION, CATEGORIZATION, RATIONAL FOR SELECTION OF INTERVIEWS**

During fieldwork, after a day of interviews, the researchers would compare notes and discuss the day's interviews. When the entire research team came, discussions were often heated as we argued about different aspects of the liberal peace and the Chinese in Liberia. After some time, it became apparent to me that two major groups of interviewees held surprisingly similar attitudes towards the liberal peace, towards each other and towards the Chinese approach to peacebuilding. The first group were the 'internationals' (primarily Western diplomatic, IO and international aid organization staff. The second group were the locals (Liberians working in government, local and international NGOs as well as civil society).

While the internationals we interviewed held a range of views, the common theme of complaint was the lack of capacity in Liberia, the endemic corruption and a sceptical assessment about the benefit of the Chinese contribution. Their assessments of the sustainability of the peace in Liberia were the most pessimistic of the three groups, holding the view that Liberia would slide back to war and anarchy in the event of UNMIL drawdown. It is worth noting that the norm in this group is to serve yearly contracts and there was no requirement to have any in-depth understanding of the Liberian situation prior to starting their contracts in Liberia. For the majority of the internationals, they were concerned that proper rules and procedures were followed.

The Liberians, whether they worked for local or international NGO or served as academics in the University of Liberia, were far more optimistic about the prospect for sustained peace post-UNMIL drawdown. Answering our question on how they assessed Liberia's current situation and the prospect of peace post-UNMIL drawdown, the vast majority provided qualified but positive assessments. For those interviewees who remained in Liberia throughout the civil war (many left as refugees and returned when the war ended), they insisted that because the conditions were so horrible and they were so traumatized by their experiences, no Liberian would want to return to war again. While

the Liberians recognized how terrible the civil war was and how UNMIL had been instrumental in restoring the peace, there was also a strong complaint against international aid agencies and the liberal peace.

On the Chinese, the Liberians were far more accommodating and positive with regards to their assessments of the Chinese engagement in comparison to the internationals.

The most consistent theme of the Liberians we interviewed were complaints against both the international group as well as the Liberian ruling elite. Liberian NGOs were very critical about how ignorant the international NGO staffs were of the local conditions and how unresponsive to pressing local needs they were. There was also observation of near universal corruption amongst the Liberian elites and the civil service. Given the relative consistency of views expressed by the Liberians and the internationals, extracts from interviews were selected for inclusion.

## **LIMITATIONS OF DATA COLLECTION**

The difficulties in data collection in post-conflict Liberia cannot be over-emphasized. As noted by Higate and Henry, “conducting fieldwork in peacekeeping missions is a notoriously difficult business”, as little informed fieldwork has been conducted on sites and little literature exists to help researchers (2009: 4). No comparable literature exists to help the author navigate the fieldwork of examining Chinese approach to peacebuilding activities in post-conflict Africa.

The difficulty with collecting data on the Liberian side, in addition to limited previous fieldwork in the country, is that the Central Bank of Liberia has not compiled balance of payments and external sector statistics since 1987. With the end of the war, Liberia has published incomplete external trade data – no complete time series data on trade, aid and FDI were published for 2000 to 2007 (African Centre for Economic Transformation, 2009: 33). In addition, different sources provided inconsistent data. Lack of reliable data from Liberia was as a result of continued misrule since before Doe and the subsequent civil wars. Also, a lack of state capacity is a typical characteristic of neopatrimonial state (see chapter seven). Accounting for the deteriorating state capacity in post-colonial Africa, Van der Walle noted that the brain drain and the low level of pay at

state bureaus meant that “budgeting systems become barely functional, with the initial budget having little bearing on actual expenditure patterns during the course of the year, while accounting and auditing standards constituted running invitations for various abuses. Statistical services broke down, with even basic national accounts data either unavailable or of increasingly suspect quality” (2001, 132). Given the neopatrimonial and post-conflict status of Liberia, the data that is available, especially those provided by official Liberian sources, needs to be treated with caution.

On the Chinese side, official Chinese material did not match data from other sources. Therefore, while it is not difficult accessing published Chinese data via the embassy or the Ministry of Commerce websites, the value and effectiveness of these projects cannot be independently verified. Poor quality of data is unfortunately the norm of the majority of studies on China in Africa. Commenting on the literature discussing South Africa’s economic relationship with China (presumably the bilateral relations with the most reliable data), an economist noted that,

Though many writers provide quantitative data on the FDI relationship [Chinese investment in SA]... there are a wide range of disparage and inconsistent figures, with several papers providing more than one estimate without attempting to reconcile them. None of the quantitative data is *credible*, because no author discusses their source(s). Where data sources are identified, they are mainly politicians or diplomats. These cannot be relied upon: in 2008 the PRC Ambassador in South Africa presented figures which were then six years old and almost certainly wrong in 2002 (Gelb, 2010: 2).

While every effort has been made to gather data, it is important that the data is read with the caution.

### **INFORMAL SOCIAL INTERACTIONS IN MONROVIA**

While on fieldwork, I spoke to a great number of non-elite Liberians as opportunities arose: taxi drivers, fellow taxi passengers, security guards, shop keepers, fellow diners in restaurants, cafés and roadside stalls. I also spoke with Western international aid workers

at social gatherings. These conversations rose naturally as I went about my business in Monrovia and this greatly shaped my understanding of the subject at hand. The comments fellow taxi passengers made as we used it for daily transport – cramped five in the back and two in the passenger seat in the front – offered great opportunity for somewhat intimate conversations. When I volunteered the fact that I was a researcher on the effectiveness of UNMIL and the Chinese approach to peacebuilding, a full load of taxi passengers expressed their welcome, volunteered information about their lives and urged me to write about their predicament. Fellow passengers animatedly complained about the differences in pay between UNMIL local and international staff, on how international staff did not understand the local context and the endemic corruption of Liberian elites. One taxi driver openly expressed the opinion that life was better under Taylor. These social encounters provided the all-important context and ‘feel’ for Liberia.

Also, I attended a lavish party at a residential compound which housed international aid agency staff for the occasion of inaugurating a new swimming pool where mainly young Western aid workers enjoyed themselves and local black Liberian drivers waited patiently in the background. This reminded me vividly of the apartheid South Africa of my youth, and provided me with a glimpse of the international aid industry that one seldom reads about in glossy annual reviews.

While these informal interactions were not presented formally in this research, they consciously and unconsciously shaped my opinions and views.

**APPENDIX TWO: MONROVIA INTERVIEWEE LIST**  
**(ANONOMISED IN THE PUBLIC COPY)**

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Research team members in addition to the author</b>	<b>Premises of interview</b>
1	12 Nov 2009	(Liberian Journalist A)			Julian Graef	Interviewee's office
2	12 Nov 2009	(Liberian Journalist B)			Julian Graef	Interviewee's office
3	13 Nov 2009	(Liberian local NGO manager A)			Julian Graef	Bamboo Bar, corner of Randal and Broad Street
4	13 Nov 2009	(Liberian journalist C)			Julian Graef	Interviewee's office
5	13 Nov 2009	(Liberian academic A)			Julian Graef	Interviewee's office at the University of

						Liberia
6	17 Nov 2009	(Liberian NGO manger B)			Julian Graef	Bamboo Bar, Corner of Randal and Broad Street
7	17 Nov 2009	(Liberian Academic B)			Julian Graef,	Interviewee's office at the University of Liberia
8	17 Nov 2009	(United Nations agency staff)			Julian Graef	Interviewee's office
9	19 Nov 2009	(Western NGO manager A)			Julian Graef, Patrick Tom, Oliver Richmond, Ian Taylor	Interviewee's office
10	19 Nov 2009	(Western government aid agency manager A)			Julian Graef, Patrick Tom, Oliver Richmond, Ian Taylor	Interviewee's office in the US embassy compound
11	19 Nov 2009	(Western government aid agency			Julian Graef, Patrick	Interviewee's office



		program manger B)			Tom, Oliver Richmond, Ian Taylor	
12	19 Nov 2009	(UN aid agency manger A)			Julian Graef, Patrick Tom, Oliver Richmond, Ian Taylor	Interviewee's office
13	20 Nov 2009	Zhou Yuxiao	EMBASSY OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA IN LIBERIA	EMBASSADOR	Julian Graef, Patrick Tom, Oliver Richmond, Ian Taylor.	Chinese Embassy guest lounge
14	20 Nov 2009	(Liberian NGO manager D)			Julian Graef, Patrick Tom, Oliver Richmond, Ian Taylor	Bamboo Bar, Corner of Randal and Broad
15	23 Nov 2009 (2 <sup>nd</sup>	(Liberian Academic B)			Julian Graef, Patrick Tom,	Interviewee's office at the University of Liberia

	visit)				Oliver Richmond, Ian Taylor	
16	23 Nov 2009	(International Financial Institution manger A)			Julian Graef, Patrick Tom, Oliver Richmond and Ian Taylor	Interviewee's office
17	23 Nov 2009	(Chinese construction manager A)			Julian Graef, Patrick Tom, Oliver Richmond and Ian Taylor	The Bamboo Bar, Corner of Randal and Broad
18	25 Nov 2009	(Liberian government official A)			Julian Graef, Patrick Tom, Oliver Richmond and Ian Taylor	National Traditional Council office in Monrovia
19	25 Nov 2009	(United Nations agency			Julian Graef, Patrick	Interviewee's office

		manager A)			Tom, Oliver Richmond and Ian Taylor	
20	28 Nov 2009	(Liberian foreign affairs official)				Interviewee's office
21	28 Nov 2009	(Liberian civil engineer)				Interviewee's office

### APPENDIX THREE: ETHICAL CLEARENCE APPROVAL

14, February, 2010

Steven Chiun-yi, Kuo

<b>Ethics Reference No:</b> <i>Please quote this ref on all correspondence</i>	<b>IR6128</b>
<b>Project Title:</b>	<b>What does China Want? An examination of Chinese involvement in the United Nations Mission in Liberia</b>
<b>Researchers Name(s):</b>	<b>University of St. Andrews. Prof. Ian Taylor; Prof. Oliver Richmond; Mr. Patrick Tom</b>
<b>Supervisor(s):</b>	<b>Prof Ian Taylor</b>

Thank you for submitting your application which was considered at the IR School Ethics Committee meeting on the 18 November 2009. The following documents were reviewed:

- |  |            |
|--|------------|
| 1. Ethical Application Form                                      | 18/11/2009 |
| 2. Participant Information Sheet                                 | 18/11/2009 |
| 3. Consent Form  | 18/11/2009 |
| 4. Debriefing Form   | 18/11/2009 |
| 5. External Permissions  | n/a        |
| 6. Letters to Parents/Children/Headteacher etc...                | n/a        |
| 7. Questionnaires  | n/a        |
| 8. Enhanced Disclosure Scotland and Equivalent<br>(as necessary) | n/a        |

The University Teaching and Research Ethics Committee (UTREC) approves this study from an ethical point of view. Please note that where approval is given by a School Ethics Committee that committee is part of UTREC and is delegated to act for UTREC.

Approval is given for three years. Projects, which have not commenced within two years of original approval, must be re-submitted to your School Ethics Committee.

You must inform your School Ethics Committee when the research has been completed. If you are unable to complete your research within the 3 three year validation period, you will be required to write to your School Ethics Committee and to UTREC (where approval was given by UTREC) to request an extension or you will need to re-apply.

Any serious adverse events or significant change which occurs in connection with this study and/or which may alter its ethical consideration, must be reported immediately to the School Ethics Committee, and an Ethical Amendment Form submitted where appropriate.

Approval is given on the understanding that the 'Guidelines for Ethical Research Practice' (<http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/media/UTRECguidelines%20Feb%2008.pdf>) are adhered to.

Yours sincerely

Dr. J.S. Murer

Convenor of the School Ethics Committee

#### **APPENDIX FOUR: FIVE PRINCIPLES OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE**

In 1954 Myanmar, China and India, during Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai's visit to India and Myanmar expounded the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence. Accordingly, on June 28, 1954 China and India signed in New Delhi and on June 29, 1954 Myanmar and China signed in Yangon, agreements to adhere to these Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence.

The Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence are:

- 1. Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty,**
- 2. Mutual non-aggression,**
- 3. Mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs,**
- 4. Equality and mutual benefit, and**
- 5. Peaceful co-existence.**

## **APPENDIX FIVE: EIGHT PRINCIPLES OF FOREIGN AID**

- 1) China always bases itself on the principle of equality and mutual benefit in providing aid to other nations.
- 2) China never attaches any conditions or asks for any privileges.
- 3) China helps lighten the burden of recipient countries as much as possible.
- 4) China aims at helping recipient countries to gradually achieve self reliance and independent development.
- 5) China strives to develop aid projects that require less investment but yield quicker results.
- 6) China provides the best-quality equipment and materials of its own manufacture.
- 7) In providing technical assistance, China shall see to it that the personnel of the recipient country fully master such techniques.
- 8) The Chinese experts are not allowed to make any special demands or enjoy any special amenities

*People's Daily*, January 18, 1964

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